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VALUES OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

VALUES OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

BY

ALFRED DAVENPORT KELLY, M.A.
SOCIETY OF THE SACRED MISSION
AUTHOR OF "UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIANITY" "RATIONAL NECESSITY OF THEISM," "MANUAL OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE"

WITH A PREFACE BY
THE REV. WILLIAM TEMPLE

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PREFACE

I REGARD it as a great honour that I am allowed to contribute a Preface to this book. Many of the arguments and lines of thought contained in it were first brought to my notice by the author's brother, Father Herbert Kelly, of the Society of the Sacred Mission, and it is partly in thankfulness to that wise and most stimulating teacher that I venture now to commend this volume.

That such a treatment of its topic is needed there can be no doubt. Many of the difficulties which beset men's minds at this time are due to the fact that few people have any clear and coherent scheme of Christian doctrine; the Creed is often taken to consist of a series of disjointed and quite independent articles; Christianity is hardly conceived by most even of its adherents as Truth, in the sense which philosophers give to that word. Consequently when some new cult appears with a complete scheme of life and the universe it seems to have a coherence and intelligible unity which Christianity had appeared to lack. It is often said that ordinary people have no use for metaphysics or theology. The fact is that they have no interest, because they have no time for interest, in those details and minutiæ which often absorb the specialist, but they have a consuming

interest in ultimate problems and in the Christian view of life as a whole.

An attempt to deal with those ultimate problems and to present the Christian view of life as a whole is bound to take a skeleton form and to pass rapidly over arguable points. The former is in the main an advantage. It enables us to realize the actual structure of the doctrine presented. The latter is an inevitable evil. For myself I wish that the author had given more space to his argument that the Historic Episcopate is organically related to the Incarnation (p. 152), or his hint that something is preserved in the transactional view of the Atonement which we cannot afford to lose (p. 244). But that is because these points are of especial interest to me; other readers would gladly leave these unexpanded, and give further space to others.

Such an effort to give in skeleton form a summary of Christian faith and practice would not be carried out in quite the same way by any two independent minds. The author's mode of exposition is not exactly mine. Probably he has reached his present system of belief by a very different road from the one which I have travelled. But what he has to say is in almost all respects what I also wish to say. At only one important point do I definitely differ from him; that is with regard to the nature of authority in the religious sphere; and even here the difference is almost negligible in practice. From the fact that the volume "Foundations" is three times quoted from the side of the objector, it may be inferred that I am on that side at this point.

And so in principle I am. I do not believe that there is anywhere any ultimate and final authority. I believe in the Bible and the Church because I was brought up to do so; experience (so far as I have experimented either in thought or in action) vindicates the belief; and so authority and experience perpetually support each other. Moreover, I see the Church's doctrine to be all of one piece. Some parts of it I believe myself to have by thought or experience verified. Therefore I accept the whole, hoping in time to gain a personal apprehension of all the rest. As this process continues the authority of Christ becomes ever more constraining. In practice I try to take the record of His Life as supplying an absolute authority. But I admit the possibility of partial error in the record without feeling that this damages His authority over me, as it would if I began with the record as undoubtedly true in every detail and made all other assurance in the sphere of religion depend on that.

Perhaps at bottom the difference is one of logical method. Traditional theology took the shape it did because traditional logic was deductive. The importance lately attached to induction led to that attempt at a purely inductive theology which was the mark of nineteenth-century Liberalism. I have ventured elsewhere ("Mens Creatrix," Part I) to express my conviction that the real way to knowledge is not a movement from certainties to what is implied in them, whether the initial certainties be general principles, as in deduction, or empirically observed facts, as in induction.

The way to knowledge is the perpetual adjustment of our apprehensions in relation to one another until a system containing all the facts and perfectly coherent is reached at last. In theology so conceived we should have no initial certainties or infallibilities; but we should have a steadily growing assurance developing towards the certainty which belongs to omniscience alone. In the process of that growth each individual thinker takes his part. The great advantage of this view is that it never requires us for one moment to pretend that in any respect our faith is already knowledge; faith keeps throughout the element of adventure which is an essential part of its spiritual value. The notion that there is somewhere an available Infallibility, in Book or Church or Pope, tends to destroy this element and therefore to lower the spiritual value of the life of faith.

I have given some space to this because in principle it is important. The chief division between different schools of theology at present is concerned, not with conclusions, but with methods of reaching them. The question of the nature of authority is, therefore, of primary consequence. I must not, however, allow myself to suggest that this book is dogmatic or authoritarian in tone. It is throughout an appeal to the reasoning faculty of the reader. And in result my difference from the author is negligible, because I believe that the modern method, fairly handled, leads to the same position as the traditionalist. In particular, I find myself in the warmest possible agreement with

what the author has to say on three points: (1) Self-perfection is not the true end of human life, whereas half, or perhaps nine-tenths, of popular devotional books assume that it is; (2) Christ is not only a revealer of the truth about God, but is God manifested; (3) Reason has the right, and indeed the duty, to inquire into all questions and determine all answers, though, of course, it has to work upon experience and cannot manufacture its own data.

All of these positions seem to me of first-rate importance. It is because the author advances them so lucidly and vigorously, fitting them into their place in a complete outline scheme of Christian faith and life, that I especially rejoice to commend his book to all readers who care for the understanding of spiritual things.

W. TEMPLE

September 1917

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND AN APOLOGIA

My best thanks are due to the Rev. W. K. Fleming, of the College of All Hallows, Barking, for reading through this book in manuscript and for many valuable suggestions, and also to a friend in Bloemfontein who did me the same good services when the manuscript was in its earliest stages.

Some of my points (e.g. the danger of making self-perfection the fundamental motive of the Christian life; and the idea of the Incarnation as a Revelation of God Himself in His personal reality, rather than of spiritual truths about God) are derived from my brother, Father Herbert Kelly. But it is only fair to him to say that he must not be held responsible for the way in which I have expressed them.

Mr. Fleming urged me to omit my imitation of "Tintern Abbey." I have not done so; but I have tried to meet his objections by pointing out that it is directed, not against Wordsworth, but against those who misrepresent him in the interests of a non-Christian or non-sacramental mysticism.

* * * * *

I have aimed throughout at rather more of logical formality than is fashionable.

It has been objected (especially by some who are inclined to disparage reason and reasoning in contrast with direct experience and intuition) that a logical method makes a book difficult and unattractive. Naturally I disagree with this objection (if it holds good in the present instance, I think the fault lies with the author and not with the method), for :

(*a*) All serious writing contains arguments, whether they are expressed or implied. If the logic is veiled, the book is only read more easily because it is read less intelligently. It costs us less effort simply because we read it without noticing what the arguments are. If we really want to follow them, the difficulty of doing so is increased by the fact that they are not made conspicuous.

(*b*) Neither is there any need for such a book being unattractive. The appeal to the head does not exclude the appeal to the feelings. The contrary is the case. We are better able to do justice to both when it is made clear where argument ends and assertion or rhetoric begin.

The method in the main must justify itself ; but I may add that in the last chapter I have tried to explain at some length what I think to be the relationships between reason, reasoning, and direct experience.

* * * * *

The supplements work out in greater detail some of the points referred to in the earlier chapters. I have placed these discussions at the end so as not to make the main line of the argument seem unduly complicated.

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PART I

PRELIMINARIES

CHAPTER I

AIM OF ESSAY

A main element in the Christian life consists in devotion or loyalty to the Christian claims. This book aims at considering the value of the Christian life—at showing how such devotion is valuable or necessary to our highest welfare.

1. A STARTING-POINT

One of the causes that hinders men from being Christians, or from being convinced Christians, is that they do not see the *good* of being Christians. They ask: What has Christianity to do with our true welfare? Why should a man live a better life because he lives a Christian life?

The question is a reasonable one. We need not object to it. It is not enough to tell the questioner that he must accept Christianity simply because it is true, whether he sees the good of it or not. St. Paul asked once, "What advantage hath the Jew?" And we have the right to ask, "What advantage hath the Christian?" If the first question needs answering, so much the more does the second.

2. AN ESSENTIAL FEATURE OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

Christianity has been summed up in three words as "union with Christ." Like most short definitions this

is inadequate; it leaves too much out. For our own purposes a definition is not needed. We can content ourselves with saying this:

Union with Christ brings duties with it; we must act up to our privileges. What God does for us lies at the heart of the Christian life; but what we do for God has also to be taken into account. From this point of view one essential feature of the Christian life consists in *devotion or loyalty to the Christian claims.*

3. AIM OF ESSAY

We can sum up the aim of this essay in a few sentences:

(*a*) It aims at answering the questions, *What makes a good life? What makes our true welfare?* In order to do this:

(*b*) It aims at showing that a *good* life in the best sense of the word must be a *Christian* life; and that a non-Christian life is a stunted, an imperfect life.

(*c*) It aims at showing the value of the Christian life, or, more fully, at showing that *devotion or loyalty to the Christian claims is valuable or even necessary to our true welfare.*

The next chapter deals at greater length with the importance of considering these points.

NOTE ON THE TRADITIONAL ACCOUNT OF THE CHRISTIAN CLAIMS

We follow in this book what we may call the "traditional" account of the Christian claims, and we assume without argument that it is in its main lines correct.

AIM OF ESSAY

A few remarks may serve to explain in what sense the word is used, and how that sense can be justified.

Many thinkers, orthodox and unorthodox alike, have pointed out that considerable differences on important points have existed in the Church from very early times; and further, that many widely accepted formularies have been explained, consciously or otherwise, in different ways at different periods of the Church's history.

Yet these same thinkers are for the most part agreed that there is a nucleus of principles which a decided majority of Christians, from an early period up to the time of the Reformation, regarded as forming a part of the essence of their religion, and on which a majority of Christians are still agreed at the present day.

The existence of such a nucleus is not affected even if it were true, as it is often said to be, that it cannot be traced in all particulars to Apostolic times; that it is the result of a development; and of a development for the worse; that it represents a regress rather than progress.

Harnack's position may be quoted in this connexion:

"If we place ourselves at about the year 200 we see a great ecclesiastical and political community, and side by side with it numerous 'sects' calling themselves Christian, but denied the name and bitterly opposed. That great . . . community presents itself as a league of individual communities spanning the Empire from end to end. Although independent they are all constituted essentially alike, and interconnected by one

and the same law of doctrine, and by fixed rules for the purpose of intercommunion.

" Each community also presents itself as an institution for public worship, . . . the distinction between priests and laymen is already a well-marked characteristic, . . . certain acts can only be performed by the priest; his mediation is an absolute necessity." (Harnack, p. 195, " What is Christianity ? ")

And again: " This enormous transformation took place within a hundred and twenty years " (of Apostolic times).

The condition described he calls " Catholicism," meaning by the term, not Roman Catholicism, but a Catholicism common in certain essential features to the Western and Eastern Churches throughout their history.

A Catholicism of this kind forms the sort of nucleus to which we have referred, and its age and prevalence give it the right to be called the traditional account of the Christian claims.

At any rate by following the lines of this account we save ourselves from the accusation that we are making an arbitrary selection of the principles which we discuss.

CHAPTER II

THE NEED OF CONSIDERING THE CHRISTIAN CLAIMS

We need to consider the question, What makes our true welfare? and, by way of an answer, to consider the nature, value, and truth of the Christian claims. We deal particularly with their value, in view of the fact that many men are non-Christians, or half-hearted Christians, just because they do not realize what bearing devotion to these claims has on their true welfare. Notes on the relationship between the truth, authority, and value, and on the danger of an individualistic idea of "our true welfare."

1. NEED OF CONSIDERING THE QUESTION, WHAT MAKES OUR TRUE WELFARE?

We are building up day by day the fabric of our lives. We cannot build well if we build at random. We need a plan. And to choose the best plan and to keep it in mind means a certain amount of consideration. Even the man who aims at nothing but his own pleasure falls short of his aim if he does not consider how the greatest amount of pleasure can be attained. An engineer, a doctor, an artist, any professional man, makes a science of his profession. We ought in common consistency to make a study of the business in which we are all engaged —the business of living the best life attainable, and of helping others to do the same.

The question, therefore, What makes a good life?

concerns us all, whether we feel its interest or not. We are not likely to live a good life if we have no idea what a good life is, any more than we are likely, as Aristotle said, to hit a target that we cannot see.

OBJECTION

Few of us can be philosophers, and only philosophers can deal with such questions systematically. Most men, without any special study, have, as they say, their principles. That is enough. Study is unnecessary.

REPLY

We can have some sort of philosophy without being philosophers. As Sir Oliver Lodge says: "Philosophy has more influence on conduct than is supposed. It may not be known by that name. People may imagine that they have no philosophy of life; but unless they are drifting casuals they must have one, though its formulation is a subject for professors."

The choice lies, not between philosophy and no philosophy, but between a bad philosophy and a good.

Those who disparage what they call "abstract philosophical" questions as to the differences between right and wrong may slide by easy degrees into materialism, and find themselves committed to the philosophical principle that right and wrong have no real meaning. Thucydides summed up this attitude once and for all in his account of the speech of the Athenians to the conquered islanders of Melos. "You know as well as we do," they said with delightful

candour, " that, as the world goes, the question of right is only discussed among equals ; while among those who differ in power, the strong do what they can, the weak suffer what they must."

We do then need consideration, for :

In the first place, we cannot take it for granted off-hand that our principles are right principles. Our principles need revising.

In the second place, to have one or more disconnected principles is not enough. We might as well be content with a builder who takes care that his corners are square and his walls plumb, but builds without a plan. If he has no plan, we shall get no house at all, at any rate not a satisfactory house, and most certainly not the house which the architect has designed.

The Greeks, wise in their generation, put over the door of their famous temple the words, " Know thyself."

No one, they thought, is truly wise unless he knows himself, and to know himself is to know the principles of a good life, the end for which our life is given us.

2. NEED OF CONSIDERING THE NATURE OF THE CHRISTIAN CLAIMS

Even though we are not Christians, it is a duty to consider what the Christian claims are. They have a practical bearing. Christ claims to set us the example of a good life, and to provide the means by which such a life can be lived. No one can say that such claims, if true, can be ignored ; and there is at least a possibility that they are true. No one can deny that in all ages

thousands of Christians have upheld their truth as a matter of personal experience. We must not ignore or reject them without consideration.

If we are Christians, the duty of consideration is obvious. God is the Divine Architect of our lives. We cannot build well without considering His plans and the materials with which He has provided us.

Most writers are agreed that ignorance of the Christian claims is prevalent among all classes, among the educated and the uneducated, non-Christians and professing Christians alike.

We have, for instance, the witness of Mr. Donald Hankey in "The Student in Arms":

"The soldier, and in this case the soldier means the working man, does not in the least connect the things that he really believes in with Christianity. He thinks that Christianity consists in believing the Bible and setting up to be better than your neighbours. By believing the Bible he means believing that Jonah was swallowed by the whale. By setting up to be better than your neighbours he means not drinking, not swearing, and preferably not smoking, being close-fisted with your money, avoiding the companionship of doubtful characters. . . . They believe in the Christian virtues of unselfishness, generosity, charity, and humility, without ever connecting them in their minds with Christ; and at the same time what they do associate with Christianity is just on a par with the formation of smug self-righteousness which Christ spent His whole life in trying to destroy."

Among the educated classes who do study religious subjects there are many who study anything rather than Christianity, who take a positive pride in being, as the Dean of St. Paul's says, "honorary members of all religions—except their own."

The majority do not study religious subjects at all, a fact to which our lending libraries bear witness by their lists tabulating the comparative popularity of books on history, science, and social subjects, etc., with philosophy and theology a bad last.

Objection

Christianity is essentially a *simple* religion. We do know its claims, and such knowledge does not need much study. It is true that we do not think very much about the sacraments, or the Church, or even about Christ's divinity (His example is what matters); but these things belong to the husk of Christianity, and not to its kernel.

Reply

Certainly, Christianity is a simple religion; but we have to distinguish a true simplicity from a false. The essential principles of Christianity may be few in number, but they have a multitude of applications to make them fit all sides of life. It is the lowest and most primitive forms of life which are the most simple. The highest forms—the human body, for instance—are the most highly elaborated. The elaborateness of a religion is evidence for, and not against, its truth. A Kaffir

blanket is a very simple garment, but we are not likely to go back to it. Just because it is so simple it fails to fit the manifold contours of the human form, and is not therefore the garment of the civilized man. The effort to simplify our religion may end in making it too simple to fit the manifold needs of our human nature.

The men who take this attitude are often the first to admit that they have never given these questions any serious consideration. Such an attitude in a Christian is extraordinarily inconsistent. He admits that the Christian religion is authoritatively revealed, and yet he speaks as though he were free to accept as much or as little of it as he likes.

3. NEED OF CONSIDERING THE VALUE OF THE CHRISTIAN CLAIMS

One of the reasons (to sum up what we said before) why men are not Christians, and why Christians are not better Christians, is that they do not realize the *value* of the Christian claims. They do not see what bearing they have on our true welfare.

Most men believe in God's existence; professing Christians believe in Christ's divinity, and perhaps also in all the other doctrines of the Church. But they hold very lightly to these doctrines, and still more lightly to the claims that go along with them. Trust in God and trust in Christ, shown in prayer, the use of the sacraments, loyalty to the Church, play a small part in their lives.

They do not see the good of these things.

It is not so much a question of "intolerance or opposition to Christianity or to the Church," as Dr. Hamilton states; "the trouble seems to be that people go their way through life and pass the Church by as something they can afford to neglect."

The line is drawn at different places by different people. Thus:

Some are not communicants, because "those who come to the Sacrament are no better than those who stay away."

Others are not Churchmen, because "it makes no difference to what denomination you belong as long as you are a Christian."

Others are not Christians, because "if you believe in God, your particular form of religion does not matter; a good Jew, or a good Mohammedan, or a good Unitarian, is as good as a good Christian."

Others are not religious at all: "if you live a good life, it does not matter what you believe."

This attitude is called "breadth of mind," but it is breadth of mind in the vulgar sense of the phrase. It does not consist in a wide understanding of other people's views, but in the conviction that their views are not worth understanding. It is not a condition of Christian charity, but "the misty twilight of a loveless toleration."

Few of those who look down on the importance of belief carry their breadth of mind to its logical conclusion; they do not say that our *moral* beliefs do not matter; that, for instance, it is all the same whether

or not we believe in the virtues of honesty, kindness, and patriotism. "Breadth of mind is to draw the line where I draw it, and narrowness is to draw it where other people draw it."

A passage in Charles Booth's book on the religious life of London brings out forcibly how men manage to remain uninfluenced by their religious ideas. "Men believe in a God to Whom they ascribe their own lax moral standard—(a God) Who makes small demands on their worship or conduct, and with Whom they are on the best of terms. They have no sense of sin. They bask in the approbation of an indulgent deity. They would resent the suggestion that they were unbelievers." The element of godly fear seems to have dropped out of their religion; "the poor devils believe—and do *not* tremble."

Failure to see the value of the Christian claims is in some cases the result of moral indifference. Men refuse to think about them for the simple reason that they do not want the trouble of fulfilling them. What some one has said in an imitation of Omar has a wide application:

I reasoned much about the False and True;
But what Truth really is I never knew;
Nor did I want to know,—lest Truth should prove
An Obstacle to what I meant to do.

But there are men of another class whom we cannot accuse of this moral indifference, and they are just the men we ought to have most in mind. They are

thoughtful and in earnest; they are in no way hostile to religion in general or to Christianity in particular. They may have no formulated objections to bring against the Christian claims. They may see the force of the ordinary arguments for the existence of God and the Divinity of Christ. They may accept nominally all the doctrines of the Church. They may say their prayers, and wish, if only for old associations' sake, that they could do so with a greater degree of conviction. And yet, in spite of all this, the claims leave them cold. They do not realize their value. They do not see that the acceptance of the claims has any practical bearing on their lives.

It is in view of such persons as these, and of ourselves, in so far as we share their attitude, that we feel the importance of considering how loyalty to the Christian claims is essential to our highest welfare.

4. NEED OF CONSIDERING THE TRUTH OF THE CHRISTIAN CLAIMS

It is not necessary for everybody to be a deep student of what are commonly called Christian evidences, but an educated Christian ought to have some idea of what those evidences are, otherwise he is liable to fall a prey to, or, at any rate, to be unduly disturbed by, any agnostic literature which comes into his hands. We are told periodically in our cheap newspapers that the scientists have succeeded in the manufacture of organic life, and the paragraph is, as likely as not, topped by some flare heading, "A Blow to the Theologians." It

ought, however, to be within the province of even the least instructed Christian to know that any discovery that science can make would be welcomed by a theologian worthy of the name. Our religion does not stand or fall with the manipulation of beef gelatine.

(NOTE. It is with the nature, and more particularly with the value, of the Christian claims that this book is mainly concerned.)

5. CONNEXION BETWEEN THE VALUE AND THE AUTHORITY OF THE CHRISTIAN CLAIMS

Dr. Hamilton says that "the chief reason why the Church is not listened to to-day is just because the (old) assumption of a supernatural religion has been challenged and by very many rejected." And he goes on to say that "the main reason for this is because men have ceased to believe that a supernatural and authoritative revelation is in any sense necessary to religion." In other words, the present situation is due to disbelief in authority, and disbelief in authority is itself due to, or goes along with, the fact that men do not see its value.

This is true, but even if we recovered our belief in the Church's authority, its doctrines would not be heartily accepted unless men realized their value, their bearing on human welfare. They would not retain their hold on our loyalty if they came to us on authority alone. It is not enough to accept what Christ has told us on His authority. He wants us to see the *value* of what He has told us. If we can see the value of Christ's

claims, the practical value, for instance, of the Church, or the Sacraments, or the Incarnation, our belief in them is immensely strengthened. If they seem to us mere arbitrary dogmas to be accepted on authority, our belief in them is precarious, and our religion becomes a religion of cold obedience, not of heart-felt gratitude.

6. CONNEXION BETWEEN THE VALUE AND TRUTH OF THE CHRISTIAN CLAIMS

We can distinguish between the truth and the value of the Christian claims, but we must not make the distinction too sharp. There is a close relationship between them. Thus:

If Christianity had no practical value, that would be evidence, and conclusive evidence, against its truth. If, for instance, it made no difference to us that God had become Man, then we should be sure that God had *not* become Man; God would not have put Himself out with no useful purpose in view. Conversely, if Christianity has some practical value, that value is evidence, if not conclusive evidence, for its truth. For if we admit that the world is guided by a spiritual purpose, and that Christianity is valuable for our highest spiritual welfare, then, if Christianity is not true, our highest spiritual welfare is unattainable, and the purpose of the world is so far thwarted.

7. NEGLECT OF THE CHRISTIAN CLAIMS NO EVIDENCE AGAINST THEIR VALUE

Many theologians, including some of unimpeachable orthodoxy, write as though Christianity were to blame

because men do not accept it. This at any rate is what their words imply if we follow them out to their logical conclusion. Certain current phrases have become so familiar that they no longer seem to us paradoxical. For example: "Christianity, in this world-wide upheaval, is on its trial"; "Christianity has failed to get hold of the nation"; "God must be nearly heart-broken at the way things are going."

Sir Oliver Lodge is still more startling. In a book on the war he quotes, apparently with approval, a passage from Fichte: "Providence itself, if one may say so, and the Divine plan of the world . . . pleads with you to save its honour and even its existence."

What wonder is it that men take us at our word, and conclude that God is weak even if He is not wicked, or ask the question seriously, "Is God dead?"

No doubt it is unfair to lay too much stress on isolated phrases. With a little ingenuity they can be interpreted in a Christian sense. Yet as they stand they are, to say the least, misleading.

For after all:

It is *we* who are on our trial; it is our fate, not the fate of Christianity, that is being weighed in the balances.

It is not Christianity that has failed to grip the nation, but the nation that has failed to grip Christianity, or to let itself be gripped.

True, God is afflicted in the afflictions of His people; but to be "broken-hearted" is to be in a state of despair, to be at one's wit's end. And God has still some forces in reserve.

Lastly, Fichte's sentence reminds us of the Norse legend. When the twilight of the gods seemed at hand, Odin ordered the Valkyries to bring up from earth the souls of heroes to man the walls of Valhalla, if so be that they might save it from utter annihilation. We have, apparently, to play the same part to-day. Well, no doubt God does want man's co-operation; but we are still supposed to have the right to believe in a Providence that shapes our ends—in a God Who "is working his purpose out as year succeeds to year," whatever man does or does not do to help or to hinder. To meet rhetoric with rhetoric: Do we really think that God would have died if we had not come to His help against the Kaiser, and that our present efforts have averted this disaster, and are nursing Him back to convalescence?

8. DANGER OF INDIVIDUALISM

In speaking of "a good life," "a Christian life," we must guard against the idea that we are looking at life from an individualistic standpoint. A Christian life is not the life of an individual regarded as an individual merely. It is the life of the Christian community, and of individuals as sharing in the community.

We come back to this point later on in the chapter on "Self-Perfection."

CHAPTER III

THE NATURE OF DEVOTION (OR LOYALTY)

Devotion consists not so much in acts as in an attitude of the self, marked by resolution, love, and reverence. Disloyalty, the opposite of devotion, is the equivalent of sin: cf. St. John's "lawlessness."

THE word *loyalty* has been adopted by Professor Royce to express his ideal of a moral life. The very sound of the word is attractive. "Where loyal hearts and true" —the chorus of that well-known hymn makes up for a good many of its obvious defects. We use it to describe one aspect, perhaps the chief aspect, of our true welfare. The word devotion is commonly used in the same sense, or in the sense of loyalty in its intensest form.

Without attempting a scientific definition, it is enough for our purposes to notice the following points:

(*a*) Devotion or loyalty to the claims made on us is THE RESOLUTION TO FULFIL THESE CLAIMS UNSELFISHLY, FROM THE MOTIVES OF LOVE AND REVERENCE, AND AT ALL COSTS. A patriot, for instance, is ready to serve his country even if he has to die for it; and he serves it unselfishly; not for fear of punishment, not for money, and not even for fame.

(*b*) Loyalty is an ATTITUDE of the self.

Devotion consists in an ATTITUDE of the self, not

simply in loyal *acts*. A man may act loyally without being loyal at heart—he may indulge in a secret reserve at heart—he may be resolved not to perform his loyal acts if such acts interfere too much with his private interests.

(*c*) Persistent NEGLIGENCE is disloyalty.

A man may say "he has never done any one any harm"; but he has been disloyal to his fellow-men if he has not tried to do them good.

So it is with the man who "does not profess to be a saint." If he thinks his candour in not professing to be a saint excuses him from trying his best to BE a saint, he is disloyal to the claims of goodness.

(*d*) Persistent IGNORANCE is disloyalty.

The man who is content to "live up to his standard" is disloyal to the claims of knowledge which call upon him to try to RAISE his standard, to find out the highest standard, and to try to reach it.

(*e*) SIN is disloyalty, and disloyalty is sin. Sin is not an idea invented by theologians with which a modern man has nothing to do. Sin is the sinful state, the attitude of disloyalty, the state of irresolution and selfishness, from which disloyal sinful acts proceed, or would proceed, under the pressure of temptation.

This is in accordance with St. John's definition, "Sin is lawlessness." Lawlessness does not consist in lawless acts, but is that state or attitude of disloyalty to law of which lawless acts are the symptoms.

(*f*) LOVE and REVERENCE are main *motives* of loyalty.

If I obey the orders of my superior, I may do so

because he is my friend, and I have his interests at heart; or because I "ought" to obey him—because obedience is "the proper thing." In the first case I act from love; in the second case I act from reverence—either from reverence for his authority or from reverence for duty.

I do not analyse my motives, and perhaps I could not if I tried; but in all cases of devotion one or both of these motives seem to be present, and all unselfish motives can be brought under one of these two heads.

CHAPTER IV

THE VALUE OF DEVOTION AN ESSENTIAL OF OUR TRUE WELFARE

Duty is an objective fact. To admit this implies the duty of devotion. Whatever the objects of, or claims on, our devotion may be, devotion to them is an essential element in our true welfare.

From the Christian point of view devotion is essential to our true welfare. Proof is perhaps impossible; but we can do this: we can show that the necessity of devotion is in accordance with our deepest convictions; that the idea of its necessity is deeply rooted in our ordinary ways of thinking and speaking; and that many of those who oppose it do so at the price of their self-consistency.

1. THE OBJECTIVE FACT OF DUTY

The language we use habitually implies that we believe the claims of duty to be valid claims—that duty is a fact, and not an illusion. We speak of the contrast between right and wrong, good and evil, what ought and what ought not to be done. All these different expressions are based on an idea that we cannot analyse, and the truth of which we cannot prove, but which, so we feel, corresponds to something in the real world.

Thus an agnostic like Huxley, in the same essay in which he maintains that men are " conscious automata," whose volition has no more influence over the course of their actions than the whistle of a steam-engine over the rest of the machinery, speaks in the most uncompromising way of its being our " plain duty to leave the world a little better and a little happier than we find it." The inconsistency of the conviction (for what can an automaton have to do with plain duties ?) bears witness to its strength.

2. THE FACT OF DUTY INVOLVES THE DUTY OF DEVOTION

If duty is an objective fact, devotion to duty is itself a duty, and an absolute duty. If I admit that it is my duty to do some particular action, then I admit *ipso facto* that it is my duty to do that action at all costs. The fact of duty involves the duty of devotion.

Apparent exceptions to this principle turn out on examination not to be exceptions at all. Thus it is my duty to work. But if I am ill, I am excused from working. To admit this, however, does not mean that because I am ill I can neglect my duty ; it means only that what is my duty when I am well has ceased to be my duty now that I am not well.

The duty of devotion to duty admits of no exceptions.

Consequently devotion is a necessary feature of a good life, of our true welfare.

Our conviction that this is so, and that nothing can

make up for its absence, is brought out in one of the best of the war poems :

Great hearts are glad when it is time to give ;
Life is no life to him that dares not die,
And death no death to him that dares to live.

3. THE DUTY OF DEVOTION IS AN URGENT AND DOMINANT DUTY

" I had rather see you dead at my feet than living in a state of mortal sin "—so the queen is reported to have said to her son who became St. Louis of France.

We may say, " How melodramatic ! how delightfully mediæval ! " But the queen only spoke the sober truth, unless we go back on the verses we have just quoted. Mortal sin is just what we mean by disloyalty. It is the refusal, the deliberate refusal, to fulfil at all costs the claims made on us. And the life of the man who has taken up this attitude is " no life," but a living death.

Objection

In the prosaic routine of ordinary life the claims on our devotion are not urgent.

They may be urgent in theory, but in practice they need not be taken too seriously. " Be good," says the world, " but "—so it adds in an emphatic aside—" not too good." In theory, men acknowledge duty as their mistress, but in their hearts they say like the lover :

'Tis only decent to profess oneself beneath her ;
And yet one need not be too much in earnest either.

They do not mean to commit themselves too far, and they take a cynical satisfaction in saying so. It is "fanatical" to be an enthusiast. Room must somehow be found for self-interest.

The "red-hot Churchman" and even the red-hot philanthropist is a faddist rather than a man to be admired.

The great multitude of our lapsed communicants bear witness to this curious inconsistency. "The Sacrament," they say, "is such a solemn thing" that they will not venture to come near it. They "are not fit" to receive it. They do not seem to see that on their own principles it is an equally solemn thing to stay away, and to remain unfit, a moment longer than they can help. This deliberate negligence that bars them from an earthly privilege should by rights unfit them for the Presence in Heaven. But in their eyes such negligence is immaterial. If they die to-morrow, the mourners will sing "For all the saints" at the funeral, and an accommodating deity in Heaven will ratify the optimistic verdict of their friends on earth.

Reply

(*a*) On critical occasions the dominance and urgency of the claims of devotion are admitted. In time of war, when a nation is fighting for its life, indifference, and even the affectation of indifference, are intolerable. If we feel indifferent, we keep our indifference to ourselves—we don't talk about "the fanaticism" of our soldiers.

(*b*) If we think it out, the duty of devotion remains just as urgent when what we call "critical" occasions are over.

To bear this out it is enough to put down a few obvious thoughts without trying to expand them. Thus:

If we are bound to go all lengths to preserve our country, we are bound to go all lengths to make it worth preserving.

If it is important to keep our country free, it is equally important to see that it uses its freedom rightly.

The existence of our country is not more important than its moral and spiritual welfare.

If I must be ready to die for my fellow-men, I must be ready to live for them. There is as much need that we should be saints as that we should be martyrs.

The horrors of peace are as great as the horrors of war. The moral evils that preceded the war, selfish ambition, senseless self-indulgence, lack of principle, hatred of discipline, and so on—it is shamefully easy to extend the list—allow no slackening of effort. Armageddon is the battle between good and evil, and it is an eternal battle. We are all conscripts, and in that war there is no discharge.

4. THE WITNESS OF THE GOSPELS

Devotion, according to the Gospels, is a main feature of the Christian life. We are dealing at present with what they say about the quality, not the object, of devotion. Whatever that object is, devotion to it

must be complete. Everything must be surrendered for its sake, even life itself. Devotion is necessary to our true welfare.

A man must sell all his possessions to win the pearl of great price. He must put in the first place the kingdom of heaven and the righteousness thereof. Eternal life—a life that begins here though it is to be perfected hereafter—depends on our readiness to give up houses and lands, father and mother and wife, for the sake of Christ and the Gospel.

Quotations to the same effect might be multiplied indefinitely.

PART II

IMPERFECT OBJECTS OF DEVOTION

CHAPTER V

INTRODUCTORY: PERFECT DEVOTION MUST HAVE A PERFECT OBJECT

Imperfect objects cannot be loved with "all our heart, mind," etc. Various imperfect claimants for our devotion.

DEVOTION to an imperfect object is a mark of an unsatisfactory life.

Our ordinary experience endorses this.

For a man to be utterly and completely devoted to his wife is called uxoriousness, and is reckoned as a fault. So in general, if I am absolutely devoted to any human being, I am said to idolize him, and such idolatry is spoken of with disparagement.

Our devotion to any imperfect object, personal or impersonal, ought to have in it something of reserve.

Only a perfect object can be the object of perfect devotion. Perfect devotion includes perfect love, perfect reverence, and perfect obedience, none of which are due to our fellow-men.

The same conviction is expressed in another way when we say that "a man must have a purpose in life," in the sense of a dominant purpose to which all other purposes are subordinate.

NOTES

To anticipate the conclusion of the argument we may say at once that, on the Christian theory, the only object of *perfect* devotion, and the ultimate object and foundation of *all* devotion, is God.

Various objects of devotion, other than God, have been put forward, more or less explicitly, in ancient and modern times. Two of them are discussed in the following chapters :

(*a*) Devotion to our own self-perfection, or " devotion for devotion's sake."

(*b*) Devotion to duty for duty's sake.

CHAPTER VI

SELF-PERFECTION OR DEVOTION FOR DEVOTION'S SAKE

SELF-PERFECTION is often made, consciously or otherwise, the supreme object of human devotion. Thus, in popular religious literature, as well as in more ambitious treatises, we hear much of "the vital importance of character building," "the imperative duty of self-culture," of "self-development," or of "realizing our personalities." "Love is the great thing," it is said (quite rightly), "and therefore" (quite wrongly) "our chief aim is to learn to be loving."

All these phrases imply the ideal of self-perfection—an ideal, as we shall try to show, that is inadequate, and indeed a form of refined and subtle selfishness.

It is the presence of this false ideal that helps to explain a modern difficulty.

In old times people used to be dreadfully puzzled because the bad are so often just as prosperous as the good. "They come in no misfortune like other folk," as the Psalmist says, "neither are they plagued like other men." This difficulty does not trouble thoughtful men so much nowadays, but there is a bigger difficulty that does puzzle us still. Why, we ask, are some people who are not a bit religious, and who are not, as far as

we can see, even in earnest about anything, so much more attractive, and even in a real sense so much better, than some religious men who are quite in earnest ?

Perhaps the explanation is just this : these earnest religious people are in earnest about *themselves* ; they are making their own perfection their chief aim. The man who has this aim may be honest and good-tempered and polite and industrious ; he may have all the virtues ; but the worst of it is, that it is about his own virtues that he is thinking all the time.

He isn't really thinking about the man in need, about the man who is the better for his kindness and his hard work. He is thinking about himself. He thinks of the man in need as just an opportunity for cultivating these virtues. He is not self-satisfied, because he knows quite well that he is not as virtuous as he ought to be. But he *wants* to be self-satisfied (though he wouldn't put the matter to himself in quite these words). Still this is what it amounts to. He wants the time to come when he will be able to say, " Now I really am kind, industrious, good-tempered," and so on. His own perfection—that is the real end of his actions.

He does kind acts because he wants to be loving ; which is a very different thing from being really loving : he is devoted outwardly because he wants to cultivate the character of devotion—an attitude which is either not devotion at all, or is devotion to self.

Love of fame has been called the last infirmity of noble minds—fame, that is, in the sense of other people's good opinion. But the " last infirmity " should rather

be called the love of *our own* good opinion, a fact which we carefully conceal by calling it euphemistically, "proper pride," "sense of our own dignity," or "self-respect."

The strong men, so some one says, who work for the welfare of a district in India as big as the British Isles feel it bad form to talk or even to think of themselves as engaged in the "raising of the masses," or in doing anything which would seem like attracting attention to the importance of their work or of themselves. They feel, in however dim a way, that whatever talents they have are not meant for the approval of themselves or of other men.

Tennyson's famous lines:

Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
These three alone lead life to sovereign power,

though they may perhaps be interpreted in a Christian sense, at first sight are open to criticism. Chesterton's paraphrase has a good deal of truth in it:

Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
These three alone make man the perfect prig.

To make the self prominent is contrary to the spirit of Christianity. We are not to treat ourselves as isolated individuals existing in a proud independence of our surroundings.

Of course, it is right to aim at self-perfection. "Be ye perfect," that is an order laid on us by the highest of all authorities. But it is not right to make our

own perfection an end in itself. It is, or ought to be, obviously wrong—it is putting the cart before the horse—to think of my kindness rather than of the person to whom I am being kind; in fact, to do so means that my "kindness" is not really kindness at all. My kindness and my devotion are given me to do good with, not that I may have the pleasure of contemplating them as I contemplate some beautiful picture in an art gallery. If I use my devotion as a means of self-satisfaction, I am twisting it clean round from the purpose for which it was given me, and it has ceased to be devotion at all.

Tennyson says:

> *And to do right because the right is right*
> *Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence.*

That is true in a sense, but there are men who do right just from the pleasure of feeling themselves to be so strong-willed that they can despise consequences at which the majority of mankind would be frightened. Such men, while they do what is right, are at heart all wrong. They are making themselves the god before whom they fall down and worship.

Some one has drawn out a comparison between a "religious" man of this type and Sam, the old porter at Charing Cross, greatly to Sam's advantage. The porter has a great many troubles to face, heat and cold and worry and distracting crowds of petulant passengers. Yet on the whole he is remarkably good-tempered, very tolerably courteous, and quite hard-working. He may

have lots of vices and no very conspicuous virtues. One would not say that he was in earnest about religion. Neither does he think about the virtues. But then he does virtuous acts without making anything of himself for doing them. He thinks about his passengers, about that woman with five children and fifteen parcels, and how he can get her a comfortable seat; and he thinks about his tips too, quite frankly. He does not think about using the station as a sort of practice ground for cultivating his own perfection; in other words, he does not think about himself. The consequence is that we think Sam is rather a decent sort of fellow. We like him better than the other man, who is so in earnest and so "religious"—"religious," that is, as men count religion, though really his religion is only a form of refined selfishness.

To put the matter philosophically: God does not exist for the perfecting of our characters; but because He exists, and is what He is, therefore our characters need perfecting to be in conformity with Him.

CHAPTER VII

SELF-PERFECTION (*continued*)

Illustrations from heathen systems—Buddhism, the Stoics, etc.

An amiable desire to make the best of everybody leads us to attach too high a value to the standards of character that accompany the great non-Christian religions of the world. Or, which is just as likely, a very unamiable desire to disparage Christianity leads men to welcome any evidence that its moral fruits are shared with the other religions. But a little thought brings out points of difference beneath the superficial similarity.

1. Take the Brahman ideal as a case in point. What can be more Christian than the renunciation of the world by the high-caste, cultivated, businesslike Prime Minister of some native State for the begging-bowl and the desolate shrine in the mountains and the long hours of mystic contemplation? But the Brahman is a pantheist. So he devotes himself, not to God, but to something less than God, to something that falls short of personality. The self-absorption at which he aims is a lower state than that personal intercourse with God which is the aim of the Christian. And so it comes about that what the Indian holy man really devotes himself to is not God, but a state of his own feelings,

a state of trance, of reverie—a religious state no doubt, but a state of himself.

2. The Buddhist writings contain many precepts which the secularist delights to honour, for they serve so well to prove that the principles of Christianity were anticipated five hundred years before Christ walked this earth. But the Buddhist, too, is saturated with the same self-centred tendency that we find in Hinduism. He aims at the extinction of his individual existence because individual existence is fundamentally bad. It is marked with desires and wants, and while desires and wants are present man will be miserable. Therefore, says the Buddhist, aim at Nirvana, in which the soul will have reached its true end, the nothingness of annihilation. Not pleasure, but the avoidance of pain, is the end the Buddhist sets before himself. And by this predominant motive all his moral maxims must be judged.

3. The Roman Stoic, like the Christian, rises above considerations of nationality and race. He is a citizen of the world. But again comes in the old motive. Self-sufficiency is his god. He is fundamentally self-centred —set on the preservation of his own human dignity. He will forgive his enemies, but because it is not dignified for a philosopher to be put out by other men's unreasonableness. You must forgive a man as you would forgive a lunatic; they "are all a little mad." The Stoic recognizes no need of devotion to a god outside himself. He is his own deity, responsible to nothing and no one but himself. "If the room smokes, leave it," says

Marcus Aurelius; and if the pains of life exceed its pleasures, leave life.

The Stoic owed it to himself and to his own dignity and self-importance to die rather than to forsake his principles. The Christian also preferred death to the abandonment of his principles, but the Christian martyr died without any sense of his own importance, but rather with a sense of his own nothingness. The Stoic died with the proud conviction that he could be broken, but he could not be bent. The Christian died joyfully with the conviction that of himself he was totally incapable of refusing either to be bent or to be broken. Whatever he could do, he could do only in reliance on God. The Stoic's cult of self-sufficiency was the diametrical opposite of the Christian's faith. Hence quite naturally, and not by a lapse into inconsistency, Marcus Aurelius felt himself to be in the opposite camp to the Christian. The Stoic made everything of himself; the Christian made nothing of himself. Thus the Christian did outwardly the same acts as the Stoic—both died for their principles—but the Stoic died to glorify the dignity of man; the Christian died to glorify the splendour of God.

The Christian theist repudiates all heroics just as he repudiates moral compromise. Devotion to God, from his point of view, is not an act of heroism, because, in the first place, it is not his own act so much as the act of God in Whom he lives and moves and has his being; and secondly, because, after all, it is only the "natural" thing for him to be devoted, in the best sense of the

word natural, seeing that he is made for God. There is no self-conscious recognition of his personal dignity about the Christian martyr when he said, " Eighty and six years have I served Him and He has done me no wrong; how can I now blaspheme my King and Saviour ? "

4. Modern secular morality is repeating the error of the Stoics in so far as it tries to drive out the sin of sensuality and sloth by appeals to self-respect or " proper pride "—excellent things in their way as long as they are not made the dominant purpose of life. When they become that, they become our gods, and we are worshipping ourselves. We have cast out one devil to bring in seven other devils worse than the first. Thus we exorcise the devils of lust by invoking the prince of the devils, pride, and a pagan sense of our own superiority.

CHAPTER VIII

DUTY FOR DUTY'S SAKE

THERE are many heathen mottoes in the world ("Evil to him who evil thinks" is one of them), but fortunately we do not find among them the phrase or its equivalent, "duty for duty's sake." We say "fortunately," since duty for mere duty's sake is a very unsatisfactory, although it is a very common, way of expressing the main end and object of a good and devoted life. It is open to criticism on two grounds:

1. "DUTY FOR DUTY'S SAKE" IS NOT THE ONLY OBJECT OF DEVOTION

Affection, kindness, love, have to be taken into account if men are to live as they ought to live.

An objector, however, might quote on his side the authority of Kant, "the father of modern philosophy," who held this theory of duty for duty's sake in its most uncompromising form. Following a modern critic (Dean Rashdall) we may summarize Kant's theory as follows:

Unless a man loves, or, rather, behaves as though he loves (we say "behaves," for only conduct, and not feeling, is, in Kant's estimate, the test of virtue)—unless a man behaves as though he loves wife, or country, or

humanity, simply from an actual conscious respect for duty and for the moral law, his conduct is worthless. If this sense of duty is absent, the purest love of the brethren (though it may be so intense that it leaves no room for the thought of duty) is on a level with the most selfish love of our own interests. At any rate, even if his conduct is not positively bad, it is morally neutral since its object is not simply "duty for duty's sake." It is tainted by love or affection.

The critic points out that this theory, apart from argument, is too paradoxical, too opposed to common sense and common experience, to be taken seriously. Sarcasm seems the best weapon of attack; and he refers accordingly to verses written by Schiller in which some unhappy disciple of Kant complains of the distress of mind caused by his master's teaching. The sense of the lines may be roughly rendered as follows:

Truly, I serve my friends, but alas, I cannot be certain
That I serve them for duty's sake, and not from affection;
Duty alone, I am told, is the object of virtuous action;
Hence I am plagued with the doubt that I am not a virtuous person.

Whereupon Schiller gives him the master's reply:

Well, you have one resource; you must learn to despise them entirely,
Then with whole-hearted dislike you can do what your duty enjoins you.

Few if any writers of repute have taken over this theory of Kant's in an unmodified form. Yet it is worth mentioning, for, curiously enough, it is still current in the philosophy of the pot-house, and even of the drawing-room and the club. "We think nothing," so X tells us, "of Mr. A or Mrs. B, for all their good works. Why, if you come to think of it, they like—(this is said very emphatically)—they actually like what they do. They like philanthropy, and I like beer or bridge or billiards. They are no better, after all, than I am, though people do make so much of them." It is odd to find these unsophisticated people, who have never heard the name of Kant, and certainly never read a line of his works, repeating the essence of his discredited theory.

They have forgotten that for a man to like doing good actions is a point in his favour. I am the worse, and not the better, if I hate the man whom I help or if I hate the trouble of helping him. Conversely, I am the better, and not the worse, if I give him my help with love and affection, and not from a mere sense of duty. It is good to be generous against the grain, but it is better to be generous ungrudgingly. God and men alike prefer the cheerful giver.

2. DUTY FOR DUTY'S SAKE IS AN INADEQUATE OBJECT OF DEVOTION

The motive of duty not only may be, it ought to be, supplemented by such motives as sympathy, affection, and love.

Certainly a mother would not be satisfied if her children tried to please her "from a sense of duty" only. Certainly we should not admire such children. Similarly we should certainly not admire the man who was content to please his friends from this high sense of duty; we should probably call him a prig. "To do right because the right is right" is a poor and cold ideal. We should not think much of the man who gives £100 to an orphanage, and then says, "Now I have done my duty; you may be able to help two or three additional cases as the result of my charity, but I don't care whether you can or not. I don't want to hear the results. Here is my money, and as to the consequences—well, the consequences are no matter to me."

It is not wrong to do kind acts from a sense of duty, but it is wrong and unchristian to be *content* to do them from a sense of duty only.

We might find the ideal of duty for duty's sake less unsatisfactory if we were content with the cold theism of those who regard God as nothing more than "the Supreme Being Who rewards virtue and punishes vice." But Christianity tells us to think of God as love, and as One Who loved men so well that He died for them to save them from their sins. We are to be kind and forgiving for love's sake. As Shakespeare says:

Why, all the souls that were, were forfeit once;
And He that might the vantage best have took

Found out the remedy. How would you be,
If He which is the top of judgment should
But judge you as you are?

Love is a feature of the true devotion which is an essential part of our true welfare.

PART III

THE CLAIMS OF GOD

CHAPTER IX

DEVOTION TO GOD AN ESSENTIAL PART OF OUR TRUE WELFARE

DEVOTION TO GOD IS NECESSARY TO OUR TRUE WELFARE

OBJECTION

DEVOTION to God and to His claims is not essential to our true welfare. It is not so urgent as religious people think. Its importance is exaggerated. This attitude is not badly expressed in Leigh Hunt's poem. Abou-ben-Adhem, the righteous rabbi, sees one night an angel writing in a book of gold the names of those who love God. "And is mine one?" said Abou. "Nay, not so," replied the angel. "I pray thee, then," said Abou, "write me as one that loves his fellow-men." The angel wrote and vanished, but the next night appeared again and showed him

The names of those whom love of God had blessed,
And lo! Ben-Adhem's name led all the rest.

"Religion," so men practically say, "is a matter of minor importance. Be philanthropic. That is sufficient in itself. Loyalty to the claims of our fellow-men will do instead of loyalty to the claims of God. God Himself (if He exists) is well content with the substitute."

REPLY

Devotion to God is essential to our true welfare because God is:

1. The only object of perfect devotion.
2. The ultimate object of all devotion.
3. The foundation of all devotion.

These points are discussed in the following chapters.

CHAPTER X

GOD THE ONLY OBJECT OF PERFECT DEVOTION

Apart from Him our life not merely falls short, it is a stunted life.

1. AN OBJECT OF PERFECT DEVOTION NEEDED

As we have seen in a previous chapter, to make life worth living we want "something to live for," some dominant purpose or object to which all our efforts can be directed: which can claim our complete loyalty. "A purposeless life," "an aimless life," is a poor life. And that purpose must be a worthy purpose. To make an idol of power, prosperity, pleasure, is unworthy of our true nature. An unworthy object is as bad as no object at all. We are thwarting our best aspirations if we do not keep such an object before us. But where can such an object be found?

2. NO OBJECT OF PERFECT DEVOTION APART FROM GOD

Our fellow-men cannot be the objects of perfect loyalty. They are themselves imperfect and transitory. It is not right to idolize a human being any more than it is right to idolize things.

Neither can duty be the object of perfect loyalty. In

one sense duty ranks higher than our fellow-men, because affection for them may have to give way to reverence for its commands. The call of duty may demand the separation, temporary or final, of the closest human relationships. Yet in another way duty takes a lower rank, for it is, after all, only a law, and a law is an impersonal thing which cannot be loved in the same way in which we love those who love us.

If our fellow-men and our duty are the highest objects our loyalty can find, that loyalty is doomed to everlasting imperfection; its aspirations remain for ever unsatisfied.

3. GOD THE ONLY OBJECT OF PERFECT DEVOTION

In God alone we find the perfect object of loyalty, love, and reverence. The law of duty is rooted in His nature and is the expression of His will; and He is at the same time perfect love and the source of all the love that exists. We have immortal longings in us, and must give those longings free play.

CHAPTER XI

GOD THE ULTIMATE OBJECT OF ALL DEVOTION

Devotion to our fellow-men or to duty has, or ought to have, consciously or otherwise, God for its ultimate object.

OBJECTION

ABSENCE of personal conscious loyalty to God is only an imperfection, and not even a serious imperfection.

Men in whom such devotion is lacking may miss something; but, after all, their life is only an imperfect life; it is not a bad life; it is not even a poor life; it may reach a high, if not the very highest, level of excellence. Abou, though he did not profess to love God, came out head of the list in God's examination. Such men may be loyal to the claims of God (although they do not recognize His claims *as* His claims) inasmuch as they are loyal to the claims of duty and of their fellow-men. They may get ninety out of the hundred marks attainable. They can be loyal to nine of the ten claims made on them, and absence of loyalty to the tenth claim, the claim of personal conscious devotion to God, does not affect their loyalty to the rest. Such lack of loyalty cannot be intensely serious. Their loyalty is genuine loyalty so far as it goes, and it goes a long way.

REPLY

Loyalty to our fellow-men is not unaffected by lack of loyalty to God. Life without loyalty to God is not merely an imperfect, but a stunted and mutilated life.

The arithmetical argument is hopelessly off the point. A man without a head may only lose a tenth part of his weight, but—he is a man no longer. Conscious loyalty to God is not an extra claim added to and independent of the rest; it is intertwined with, and intensifies, them.

God is not only the perfect object of devotion, He is the ultimate object of all devotion; and this fact is meant to be kept in mind habitually. We are to do all things for God's sake—*ad majorem Dei gloriam.*

1. GOD AS THE ULTIMATE OBJECT OF DEVOTION TO OUR FELLOW-MEN

A picture by Millais with the lines of an old English song for its motto expresses this conviction, and the popularity of song and picture show how widely and deeply that conviction is felt. The picture is that of a Huguenot refusing his wife's request to tie on his arm the badge which, at the price of a lie, would save him from loss of liberty and life. The lines sum up the lesson of the picture:

> *I could not love thee, dear, so much,*
> *Loved I not honour more.*

Honour and duty in the Huguenot's mind stand for God. Behind his love and loyalty to his wife lie love

and loyalty to God. The two loyalties are not separate. The man's love for God increases his love for his wife. He loves her better just because he loves God best. Our reason perceives the truth of the song even if we fail to express in words the process of reasoning by which the perception is attained, just as we see a thing in front of us though we know nothing of the science of optics or of the physical processes which accompany the act of vision. So far as we love men apart from God, we are in danger of degrading them from their rank in God's kingdom, and treating them as isolated individuals whose highest aim would be their temporary satisfaction. We should be loving them, not more, but less, if our loyalty to them did not have God for its ultimate object.

Love for our fellow-men, real and true as it is, passes beyond the individual, and is dissatisfied until it finds firmer ground in something deeper and more permanent, of which the individual is only the partial expression. Thus to a Christian his fellow-men are so many channels of the incoming tide of the love of God. God's own love is manifested in the love they have for us. God does not merely stand alongside of them, or in the background behind them ; His love shines through them : their love is lit at the central fire that burns in the heart of God. Their love is a gift ; God is the Giver. They love : God is love. We are to love God, and them for God's sake, because He first loved us. All true love, therefore, from the Christian point of view, should find its ultimate end in God.

Perhaps it is because a man like Abou has a half-conscious love for God at the back of his love for men that he ranks high in God's estimation.

Even so, Abou would have been the better if his love had been explicit. The putting of Abou absolutely first reminds one a little of the street-corner orator who raises a cheer by his sweeping assertion that no Christians are really sincere, and that all the best men are to be found outside the doors of the Church.

Abou himself, at any rate, unlike many of his admirers, has the saving grace of humility. He was not triply bound in the brass of self-complacency. He was not shutting his mind against the claims of full and conscious loyalty for God. He did not claim the highest place as a right because he loved his fellow-men. He only asked, "speaking low," that this might be put to his account. And we may believe that when he had won God's favourable verdict, his mind was opened and that he responded in the future by loving God and trying to love Him better.

The hearts of those who love us well,
Our hearts in turn to love compel,
Revealing Him Who loves us best,
In Whose vast love our hearts find rest.

2. GOD IS THE ULTIMATE OBJECT OF OUR DEVOTION FOR DUTY

The laws of duty and morality are not just our human ways of thinking without any reality independent of

ourselves to correspond to them; they are not society conventions to be accounted for by the process of evolution. They are rooted in the nature of things. And, as Nature depends on God, they are rooted in God Himself. To be disloyal to any of these claims is to go against Nature, the true nature of ourselves and of the universe; and to go against Nature is to be disloyal to God.

CHAPTER XII

GOD THE FOUNDATION OF ALL DEVOTION

Apart from God we live in an alien universe, and all forms of devotion are impaired, and become, in the long run, precarious.

God is not only the ultimate End and Object, He is also the Foundation, of all Devotion. All devotion (we can make out a strong case for the assertion) must deteriorate, and in the long run perish, apart from the conviction that it has its foundation in God.

"Is the Universe friendly? that is the question, if I were allowed one and one only, which I should propound to the inscrutable Sphinx that guards the riddle of human life." The importance which the writer attached to the question, expresses his conviction that the claims of life and loyalty, if they have no foundation in the nature of things, cannot be taken seriously, or at least cannot be reverenced as they ought. If we are confronted with an alien and unfriendly Universe wholly indifferent to us and to our highest interests, human life can only be regarded as "a transitory episode in the long process of physical evolution playing a superficial part on one of the meanest of the planets."* Natural

* Balfour.

science at any rate cannot tell us anything to the contrary.

Many an æon moulded earth before her highest, Man, was born,
Many an æon, too, may pass when earth is manless and forlorn.

In this case the best things in the world—loyalty, love, personal relationships—must be at the same time the shortest lived, the most fragile. They spring up, no one knows how or why, in a blind, unconscious, impersonal, indifferent Universe and into a blind, unconscious, impersonal, indifferent Universe they must be reabsorbed. Life has no purpose underlying its existence, for no such thing as purpose has any permanent place in the dead Universe in which we find ourselves.

Life with its claims becomes as irrational as the Djinn's palace that we read of in some wild story in the Arabian Nights, flashing suddenly into view and as suddenly disappearing in the barren sands of the Sahara. It is even more irrational, for there is not even the agency of the Djinn to account for, nor the presence of a spectator to notify, the miraculous phenomenon of its transitory and purposeless existence.

But the fact that men persist throughout the ages in taking the claims of loyalty seriously, seems to involve the conviction that these claims do not hang in the air, that they are rooted in the nature of things, that, in a word, " the Universe is friendly."

If the Universe is friendly, this means, when one thinks

it out, that there is a personal God above and in the Universe Whose existence gives human life its meaning and its value. The conviction is there, though it may be barely conscious, and the more conscious that conviction becomes the more secure becomes our loyalty to God and to the claims He makes on our loyalty.

Many men have indeed succeeded in maintaining a conviction of the value of human life in spite of their lack of belief in God in Whom that value has its foundation. But few of them have succeeded in inspiring their contemporaries with their own convictions.

Their own characters, too, have been impaired. Their minds have been clouded with a melancholy, a pessimism, an austerity which are in striking contrast with the happy confidence, the absence of lingering, paralysing regrets, the buoyant gratitude which have been conspicuous in all generations, and among all classes of men, within the ranks of the Christian Church.

CHAPTER XIII

THE SIN OF DISLOYALTY

From the Christian standpoint, absence of loyalty is, normally, disloyalty, and disloyalty is sin.

Objection

Absence of loyalty to God is not necessarily sinful.

The claims of loyalty may indeed be urgent on men who realize the facts—who realize God's perfection, His power, love, and condescension, what He is, and what He has done for us. But then these facts are precisely what the majority of men fail to realize, and failure is not always, or even generally, their own fault. It is the fault of their education or of a constitutional incapacity. Men are born with a religious temperament just as they are born with a capacity for appreciating music.

Of course, if I realize that I owe my welfare to the love of a benefactor I must respond to his love. But if my benefactor has acted anonymously, the case is different. I cannot be loyal to him if I do not know him, and my absence of loyalty is not disloyalty, and is certainly not in any way sinful.

Now there are millions of people in the world to whom God is an anonymous benefactor. They have never

even heard of the Christian idea of God as the great Lover.

Even in Christian countries many, perhaps a majority, of men, even of professing Christians, are not naturally religious; they have heard of God's love, but the fact does not appeal to their imagination; it does not come home to their hearts.

Such men cannot love God, and cannot, therefore, be fully loyal to Him (since love is a part of loyalty). But their absence of loyalty cannot be called disloyalty. It cannot be called sinful.

REPLY

1. In the case of professing Christians absence of loyalty is very often the result of culpable thoughtlessness, and culpable thoughtlessness is positive disloyalty. We admit that the heathen who have never heard of the Christian view of God as the perfect Lover cannot be disloyal to Him. But in our case God is not an anonymous benefactor. He has been at pains to press His claims on our notice. He has placarded them before our eyes.

If we are Christians, we know that these claims are true. We know that we can realize their truth, and that it is our fault, normally, if we fail to do so. If we thought otherwise, we should be laying the fault on God; we should be accusing God of being like a bad teacher who cannot make his lessons come home to the minds of his pupils. If, then, we have not realized the fact that God is the perfect Lover, in many cases at

least, it must be our culpable thoughtlessness that has prevented our realization. And culpable thoughtlessness is disloyalty. Nothing can be more horribly presumptuous than for us to say to God: "You did everything possible to win our loyalty and our love, and we would not take what You did into account. We never took the trouble to think about it. We thought so much about business or pleasure that we had no time to think about You."

2. The case of non-Christians is to some extent the same. We are without excuse if we have to say: "I was told that Almighty God at the cost of His own life tried to win my loyalty; I saw that if the fact was true it was the most tremendous fact conceivable. Once, it may be, I did think it was true, but I let my conviction slip away from me; I let my spiritual life become atrophied. Even if I never had this conviction I might have tried to find out whether the claim was a true claim, but I never took the trouble to do so."

Thus the claim of Christians and non-Christians alike for considering what God is and what He has done is intensely urgent. There are honest doubters who have weighed these claims and cannot or do not accept them. We are not considering such cases at present. Absence of loyalty, in so far as it is the result of culpable thoughtlessness, is, and must be, intensely sinful.

CHAPTER XIV

TRUST

Trust is a recognition of our dependence on God; such trust is essential in itself, and is also a condition to some extent of God's help. Furthermore, trust is an active condition involving prayer and use of the sacraments. We must also trust in God's work outside us—in what He does independently of our co-operation.

Two features in the Christian life stand out prominently in the New Testament: one of these is devotion, about which we have spoken already; the other is faith in the sense of trust or reliance.

1. ASPECTS OF TRUST

(*a*) *Trust based on dependence.*

We depend on God for everything. All good gifts come from Him. Without God we can do nothing. With God, in God, we can do all things.

We have no righteousness of our own, but only the "righteousness of Christ." Boasting is excluded, since we have nothing that we have not received.

(*b*) *Trust as recognition of dependence.*

Faith in God is more than belief that God exists. It is more than belief in various truths about God, e.g. that God is good, that God is our Judge.

Faith in God, in the sense to which the New Testa-

ment attaches most importance, is TRUST OR RELIANCE —a recognition of our dependence on God—of the way in which He works in us and for us, and of the way in which He works out His purposes independently of us.

(*c*) *Trust as a condition of God's help.*

Apart from God we can do nothing. But this is not the whole truth. Apart from trust in God, apart from recognition of our dependence on Him, we cannot do all that we ought to do, be what we ought to be, or receive all the gifts He wants us to receive.

(*d*) *Trust as an active practical recognition of dependence.*

Trust is an ACTIVE attitude. It is not only a passive expectancy of what God does for us or in us, but an active effort to appropriate His work. It involves, for instance, prayer and the use of the sacraments.

2. THE NECESSITY OF TRUST FOR OUR TRUE WELFARE

We are dealing with a difficult subject. It is difficult, not because it lies outside, but because it is a part of, our ordinary experience. A living experience is like a living body. If we carry the process of vivisection too far, we may find that we are " vivisecting " a corpse.

(*a*) *The necessity of recognizing our dependence.*

OBJECTION

Capable, talented men—artists, financiers, statesmen, artisans—may and ought to recognize their own capacities. It is false modesty to shut their eyes to the facts. They must, of course, do justice to their teachers ;

they must recognize that their capacities were to some extent inherited; but they may also recognize that they have improved their capacities by efforts of their own. They may treat their devotion—their goodness—in the same way. They may rightly lay claim to it, and put it down, in part at least, to their own efforts.

Reply

We cannot disprove the objection. We can only prove that it is not in accordance with common experience, with our ordinary convictions.

Good men, Christians or otherwise, habitually repudiate the claim to goodness; they do not claim credit for what they are or have done. It is not merely that they are too modest to talk about their own "merits"; they have no merits of their own to talk about. Their goodness stands on quite a different footing from their capacities and talents. These they may recognize freely.

There is an excellent illustration of this attitude in Browning's "Easter Day." It describes the experiences of a Christian martyr. His testimony has been written for him after his death by a friend. There is a noteworthy absence in the account, just as there is in the Bible, of anything like hero-worship, of any sense of a man's having done anything out of the ordinary, anything meritorious. What the man did is, in his own eyes, hardly worth thinking about, and now that it is over he has forgotten all about it.

I was born sickly, poor, and mean,
A slave: no misery could screen
The holders of the pearl of price
From Cæsar's envy: therefore twice
I fought with beasts, and three times saw
My children suffer by the law;
At last my own release was earned:
I was some time in being burned,
But at the close a Hand came through
The fire above my head, and drew
My soul to Christ, whom now I see.
Sergius, a brother, writes for me
This testimony on the wall—
For me, I have forgot it all.

We can see the same thing from another point of view. A good life, as we said in the first chapter of this book, is not the life of an individual as an individual. This does not merely mean that each of us is to think about others, to have some devotion to their interests. It means that our devotion itself, our whole individual life, is united to a deeper, wider life than our own.

The common soldier on the field of battle is not only devoting himself to his army or to his country; but in and along with his army or his country. The devotion of his army and his country is working in his heart, and in some degree, however dimly, he knows that this is so.

(*b*) *Necessity of recognizing our dependence on God.*

The Christian goes further. He knows that the

deeper, wider life, union with which makes his true welfare, is the life of God. "It is no longer I, but Christ Who liveth in me."

Our union with God and our recognition of that union are, therefore, not merely *means* to a good life, they are essential *elements* of a good life.

OBJECTION

Granting the *fact* of this union with, and dependence on, God, it is not really essential that we should RECOGNIZE it. It is not necessary for our health that we should be aware of all the processes that go on in our bodies. The contrary is the case; "the truly healthy man does not know that he has a digestion." Nor is it necessary that we should be aware of the fundamental facts that underlie a good life.

Certainly, men who are not religious often reach a very high level of unselfish devotion. Soldiers give us examples of this in illimitable numbers.

"We must not take credit to ourselves for our actions"—that is admitted. But as long as we do not attribute them to ourselves, it does not much matter to whom or to what we attribute them. We may say they are due to the character with which we were born, or to the circumstances in which we were brought up, for neither of which we are responsible. Or, more commonly, we may not attribute them to anybody or anything; we may simply not think about them at all. "The truly healthy man does not know that he has a soul," and anyway the less he thinks about it the better.

REPLY

The objector is, in many ways, quite right. We have tried to do justice to his views in the chapter on self-perfection as an unsatisfactory object of devotion.

We admit that when a man acts loyally for his army or his country, without thinking about himself, and even without thinking explicitly about his country, so far he is acting on truly Christian lines.

But the objector's view draws the line in an arbitrary way. The good of life, after all, does involve more than a distant DEVOTION to our friends; true devotion involves INTERCOURSE with them—recognition of the fact that their lives are intertwined with ours. And what is true of our friends is still more true of the relationship between us and God.

Our lives are stunted and thwarted if that recognition is not present.

Furthermore, it is hard or almost impossible for any one to carry through this line of simple unreflective devotion to the end.

The soldier is not always fighting. He comes back to the routine of ordinary life; it is easy for him then, fatally easy, to drop back from the high levels into the old narrow, selfish, individualistic outlook. The heathen world, as we have said before, in ancient and modern times alike, gives us plenty of martyrs, but few saints; plenty of men who will die for their comrades, few men who will live for them.

We do not want men to be always thinking about their own souls. We do not want them to be thinking

about their own devotion or their own faith. But we do want them to think about the OBJECT of devotion and the OBJECT of faith—that is, of God. We want them to have devotion to God, not devotion for devotion's sake. So, too, we want them to have, not "faith in faith," but faith in God, the object of faith.

3. THE NECESSITY OF TRUST IN GOD'S WORK OUTSIDE US

We have been thinking so far of the way in which God works in our hearts, helping us to co-operate with Him, and so to be instruments in carrying out His purposes. But God is not dependent on human co-operation. We must trust in Him to carry out His purposes whether we co-operate with Him or not—a duty that we are sometimes liable to leave out of account.

We had an instance of this in the quotation cited in a previous chapter, in which Providence was said to appeal to us "to save its honour, and even its existence."

Again, men have taken it for granted that when nations engage in an unjust and aggressive war God cannot in any sense be the cause of such a war, and further, that those who are fighting on the side of justice are necessarily engaged in carrying out God's plans, so that if they are defeated, God's plans are defeated likewise.

The assumption is made too hastily. Consider the break-up of the Roman Empire. In that period Christians of the Empire were fighting against heathen

invaders. It was God's will that they should fight, but it does not follow that it was God's will that they should win. God may have intended their defeat as a means for the furtherance of His plans. The downfall of the Empire cleared the way for a new Europe. God can make human injustice flow in His own channels to His appointed end. This is how the New Testament regards the action of the Jews and of Pilate in bringing about the crucifixion. In a sense, those who are fighting for unjust motives may be " co-operating " with God, but it is a blind co-operation at best.

Another instance of the same attitude is the reiterated cry for great men. The demand, when made as importunately as it often is, is a faithless demand. God raises up great men, and uses great men ; but He can do without them, and so can we.

This lack of trust results naturally in self-importance on the one hand and in worry on the other.

It results in self-importance in so far as we think that, like Atlas, we are bearing on our own shoulders the weight of the universe, and that the failure of human plans is necessarily the failure of God's.

It results in worry when we find, as we do find, that we are unable to bear the weight, as though God would not see things through whether men help or hinder.

Of course if we think of God's work outside us to the exclusion of His work in us, the result will be a policy of apathetic drift as undesirable as self-importance and worry. Both sides of the matter have to be taken into account.

We can consider another aspect of the same subject. We have just said that while we must work for God, yet at the same time we must not be self-important or worried about that work.

In the same way, while we must love God and trust God, we must not be self-important or worried about that love and trust. God's love for us is an infinitely greater fact than our love for Him. Penitence for our imperfect love and trust is right, but worry is wrong. We should be stultifying God's love for us if we allowed our delight in that love to be swallowed up altogether in the sorrow for our lack of love. Similarly, we are asked to put our trust, not in our attitude to God, but in His attitude to us. It is trust in God, not trust in our own trust, that is a part of the essence of the Christian life.

There is a little moral story in Lewis Carroll's "Sylvie and Bruno." The good child has the offer of two rings—one signifying "Everybody loves Sylvie," and the other "Sylvie loves everybody."

Needless to say she chooses the latter.

But a fair case might be made out for the alternative. At any rate if it was a case of choosing which we should THINK of most, our love for others or theirs for us, there is no doubt about the answer. It is more healthy to have the outward outlook; certainly a man would rather dwell on the wonder of his mother's love than on his own.

Shakespeare's Antony is at his best, not when he is thinking how to make his rhetoric serve Cæsar's honour,

but when he drops his rhetoric to lose himself, if even only for a moment, in the thought of the man he has lost :

He was my friend, faithful and just to me.

So the Apostle sinks back restfully on Christ " who loved me and gave Himself for me."

CHAPTER XV

HOPE AN ESSENTIAL OF OUR TRUE WELFARE

According to the New Testament Christ Himself was inspired to bear sufferings by the hope that was set before Him; and St. Paul writes as though that hope was meant to be a real influence in our lives when he speaks of the ineffable and unimaginable things that God has prepared for them that love Him.

The hope found in the masters of the Christian life is fitted also for their disciples.

Objection

Protests in the interests of a "higher morality" are often made against the Christian hope.

The hope of heaven, it is said, is a selfish hope; at any rate it is "more noble" to act without the hope of reward than with it.

Reply

We content ourselves with a few obvious criticisms (remembering that certain people once thought scorn of the pleasant land that was promised them, and that they are not held up for our admiration).

1. Heaven is not merely a state of perfect and permanent pleasure. It is essentially a state of moral and spiritual perfection. It is *to love God and His saints and to be loved by Him and them perfectly and for ever.*

A state of mutual love and service is the diametrical opposite of a state of selfishness; and it can hardly be selfish to hope for a state in which selfishness does not exist; for a city

> *Where God Himself shall be our great Reward,*
> *God seen, served, loved, for ever, perfectly.*

2. A philanthropist working for his fellow-men hopes for the success of his work. He hopes to make them better and happier, and, incidentally, to become better and happier himself. He is more noble, not less noble, because he works hopefully. Then why should it make him less noble to work and hope for a state in which goodness and happiness are made perfect?

3. Even if Heaven were regarded merely as a state of perfect pleasure, we should reach the same conclusion.

If my friend works harder than I do because his unselfish patriotic motives are stronger than mine, so far he is "more noble." But the remedy for me is, not to think less of my wages, but to think more of my country, until my patriotism equals his.

It is ignoble of me to work purely for the sake of Heaven regarded as a material reward; but it is not ignoble of me to work WITH that hope. To become more noble I must think, not less of Heaven, but more of the kingdom of God.

4. Even a non-moral hope may have indirectly a good influence on my character. Hope of an increase of wages may lead me to avoid, let us say, self-indulgence. I am not a better man because I avoid self-indulgence from a selfish motive; but my self-restraint, however I came by it, certainly gives me a better CHANCE of becoming a better man.

And the hope of Heaven, even if we take the vulgar view of its nature, may have a good influence in a similar way.

NOTE.

This discussion is worked out at greater length in the Supplement.

CHAPTER XVI

FEAR

FEAR—the fear of the loss of God, and of the judgment of God—has a place in the Christian life.

The fear of God's judgment, and belief in the value of such fear, has dropped out of our minds because, to a great extent, we have forgotten what God's judgment means.

Fearlessness of death is not necessarily a mark of true courage. Cowardice is being afraid of what is not terrible; but death is terrible because "death is an end."

The Christian agrees with Aristotle. Some things are really terrible. Of such things a man ought to be afraid. Not to fear them is not courage, but stupidity—a beast-like incapacity to see things as they are. The Christian, however, says that death is not an end, but a beginning. The terrible thing that ought to be feared is the judgment, and the God Who is the Judge. "Fear Him," says Christ emphatically; "yea, I say unto you, fear Him."

At first sight the Christian world does fear God and His judgment. The Advent hymns testify to this fear: e.g. "Lo, He comes in clouds descending," and "Great God, what do I see and hear?" Yet the fear does not

lie very deep. The fear is a pleasant fear. It is like the pleasant thrill that we feel when we hear the rumble of a distant storm or the rattle of hail on a roof when we are safe inside. The storm goes round and round some distant hill without ever coming nearer. There is no danger in it, only a thrilling suggestion of possible danger.

One reason why the judgment fails to impress us is that we think of it solely as a distant event rather than as a present process.

To judge men is to sort them out and to put them in their own place. The judgments delivered in a law court are superficial. They deal in a rough way with outward actions only. But there is a silent process of sorting out which is going on in our lives continuously. Each time some man gets the chance of acting unselfishly or honestly in the face of temptation he is being judged. He may welcome and accept such an opportunity. Or he may say, "A man must live," "Other people do this; why should not I?" "If I refuse to do it, what do I gain? where do I come in?" So the chance goes by, and the man, as we say, has "given himself away." He has "shown what he is made of." He has taken sides with the bad against the good. He has been tested, and sorted out, and put in his place by the opportunity, and the opportunity has been offered by God, and so in a true sense he has been judged by God, and has made it harder for himself in future to see and to do what is right.

The continuous process of judgment may be known

only to God, but it is real. It is this silent process, leaving its invisible marks on the soul, that is so terrible, so much to be feared. The judgment at death and the judgment at the Last Day are not separate events, they are the climax of a long process.

Looking at life rightly, we see the end in the beginning. The final judgment no longer seems distant. It is only a sort of unveiling of what is now going on. The punishments and rewards of the future judgment are largely the same in kind as the punishments and rewards of the present. The sorting out which goes on now is either a process of separation from, or an approach towards, what is good, and what is good means God. The final judgment is the end of such a process when we recognize where we are, and what we have done with ourselves, unmistakably and for ever.

PART IV

THE CLAIMS OF CHRIST

CHAPTER XVII

INTRODUCTORY: THE NATURE AND VALUE OF THE CLAIMS OF CHRIST SUMMARIZED

Contrast with heathen religions: Christianity is a religion marked by present personal relationships with its Divine Founder. Devotion to Christ, and trust in Christ, are essential parts of our true welfare.

1. THE CLAIMS OF CHRIST STATED

From the traditional point of view Christ is God—God the Son made Man for us men and for our salvation. This is what we mean by the Incarnation.

The Incarnation bears on our salvation in three ways which we discuss in order in the following chapters:

(*a*) Christ is the means of *knowledge*. He reveals to us truths about God and man, and, primarily, He reveals to us God Himself.

(*b*) Christ is the means of *grace*. Grace is Christ's life working in us, and by this grace true devotion becomes possible.

(*c*) Christ is the means of *pardon*.

Thus Christ gives us His teaching; He gives us grace to understand, love, and carry out His teaching; and He gives us pardon for our failures and refusals to respond to Him as we ought. He saves us from the ignorance, lovelessness, weakness, and guilt of sin.

Furthermore, He saves us, not merely by making us better men, in the sense of better individuals, but by the gift of a new life that makes us no longer mere individuals, but lifts us into a deeper, wider life than our own.

2. A CONTRAST WITH HEATHEN RELIGIONS

There are many likenesses between Christianity and other religions. The likenesses, however, from any point of view, Christian or otherwise, are in many ways superficial, while the contrast is fundamental. Narrow-minded men forget this, though the contrast is not hard to see; it can be summed up in a sentence. Permanent personal relationship to an historical founder is of the essence of Christianity, but forms no part of other religions, not even of the two which have such founders, namely, Buddhism and Mohammedanism.

"I am the prophet of God," so runs the teaching of Mohammed; "rely on my teaching, but do not rely on me personally to enable you to carry my teaching out. Rely on God or on yourselves."

Similarly, Gautama, the founder of Buddhism, only claims to be the first of a line of "Buddhas" or "enlightened ones." "The Buddha," he says to his disciples, "thinks not that it is he who should lead the brotherhood, or that the order is dependent on him. Be lamps to yourselves, be a refuge to yourselves. Those who, either now, or after I am dead, shall hold fast to the truth as their lamp, and do not look for refuge to any besides themselves, shall reach the top-

most height. When I have passed away and am no more with you, my words, my explanations, will be with you still " ; (in that sense, and in that sense only) " the Buddha has not left you." *

The contrast with Christianity is clearly marked. Christ " taught no method by which men might carry out His teaching whether He Himself personally existed or was annihilated." He makes Himself, not His words, the centre of His message. Not " believing Him " (i.e. believing that His teaching is true), but " believing *in* Him " (a very different matter), is the pivot on which Christianity turns. He does not pass away. His relationship to His disciples is a permanent personal relationship. He is to be with them always even to the end of the world.

3. THE VALUE OF CHRIST'S CLAIMS

On the Christian theory devotion to Christ, and trust in Christ, are essential elements in our true welfare.

Objection

Our relationship to God, our Heavenly Father (so a Liberal Protestant might say), is a personal and permanent relationship. He is the object and foundation of our loyalty, and the source of all the help needed to make that loyalty possible. Why is not this enough ? Even if you can prove that Christ is God, His claim on our loyalty lays on us an additional and unnecessary

* " Encycl. Brit." : " Sacred Books of the East," quoted in Gore's Bampton Lectures.

burden; loyalty to Him, if we are already loyal to God, has no practical value.

REPLY

We may notice in this chapter the following preliminary points:

(*a*) *Need of explaining the value of Christ's claims.*

It is a fair request that we should show the practical value of the claims of Christianity. It is not enough to prove that Christ is God, and that because He is God His claims must be accepted on His divine authority. Both the doubter and the believer are meant to see the practical value of these claims; otherwise the doubter will go on doubting them, and the believer will only acquiesce in them—they will not come home to his heart or to his mind; they will have no apparent connexion with the needs of his nature.

We try to show that devotion to Christ is not an unnecessary addition to our devotion to God; that Christ is really needed as the means of knowledge, grace, pardon, and new life.

(*b*) *The witness of the theologians.*

Orthodox thinkers have differed widely in their explanations of the value of Christ's work. But their differences are no disproof of that value. On the contrary, the very variety of the explanations is evidence that there is something to explain. It shows how persistent the conviction is of the value of what Christ has done for us; and the persistence of the conviction

is evidence, in its turn, that the conviction is based on a fact, and not on an illusion.

(*c*) *The witness of Christian conviction.*

Tell simple people that they need only believe in God as the Great Father; that Christ was a mere man who gave us an example of loyal sonship to God. They may not be able to say exactly what is missing, but that something is missing they will be sure. They will feel baulked, and let down, and disappointed. They are sure that somehow or other the goodness of Christ has a vital connexion with their own goodness, and His life with their own lives.

CHAPTER XVIII

CHRIST THE MEANS OF KNOWLEDGE

Human knowledge is insufficient apart from the Incarnation. The Incarnation is a guarantee of Christ's teaching—of its truth and fullness (evidence of "intrinsic excellence" not enough). Further, the fact of the Incarnation, viewed as distinct from Christ's teaching, constitutes a revelation of God's nature—a revelation about God; and constitutes also a revelation of God Himself—it brings home to us God's personal reality.

1. THE INSUFFICIENCY OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE APART FROM THE INCARNATION

In the sphere of religion, apart from the Incarnation, we both want and need more knowledge than we have. Common sense, science, and philosophy are not enough for our purposes.

"We are like children," says some one, "lost on a dark common in the dead of night." We put our riddle to the Sphinx, "Is the Universe friendly?" but there is no voice nor any that answereth, nor any that regardeth.

Natural science, the great achievement of the last hundred years, does not concern itself with the problem of God. It admits that such discussions lie outside its sphere. As a book on modern science says:*

* Whetham, "Development of Modern Science."

Beyond the bright searchlights of science,
Out of sight of the windows of sense,
Old riddles still bid us defiance,
Old questions of Why and of Whence.
There fail all sure means of knowledge,
There end all the pathways we've trod,
Where man, by belief or denial,
Is weaving the purpose of God.

This conclusion, we must admit, is true if science is speaking for itself, and is not attempting to close up other avenues of research.

Philosophy, which is common sense systematized—a particularly strenuous effort to think things out—goes beyond natural science, but is a poor substitute for a revealed religion. Not all, not even a majority, of philosophers have arrived at a clear conviction even of God's existence; and those who have done so have not made their convictions general among their fellow-men.

And some have confessed both their own incapacity and their need of help from a higher source. As Plato says in a pathetic passage: "You feel how very hard is the attainment of certainty on questions such as these. Yet I should think him a coward whose heart failed him before he had examined them on every side. For he should either persevere until he has learned the truth about them, or, if this is impossible, I would have him take the best of human notions, and let this be the raft on which he sails through life—not without risk, as

I must admit—if he cannot find some word of God which will more surely and safely carry him."

2. THE INCARNATION GUARANTEES THE TEACHING OF CHRIST

On the traditional view Christ is divine; we possess, if not in all cases His exact words, the main principles of His teaching; and we may be sure, even if He was liable in some respects to human error, that He did not err in regard to truths of essential importance. Furthermore, we find from the Church, its Creeds, the general consensus of its teaching, and its Bible, what these essentials are.

We have in them a body of doctrines that possess a real, even if not a final infallible, authority. In short:

Christ tells us spiritual truths about the nature of God and man, and because Christ is divine we can rely on what He says.

An ordinary prophet, in the Old Testament sense of the word, might have the main contents of his message guaranteed by God, but he was not guaranteed to be a teacher of the whole and complete truth that man needs to know.

This is the ordinary and most obvious way in which the matter is stated. It does not take us very far, but it is correct as far as it goes.

Objection

We do not need this guarantee for the certainty of spiritual truths. They do not need to be endorsed by

an external authority. The evidence of their "*intrinsic excellence*" or INTRINSIC REASONABLENESS is enough.

"Belief in a doctrine must rest on the evidence of reason and experience, and until it does so, a man has no right to call his beliefs his own"; "A prophet must commend his message to us by awakening a response in our hearts. This is the only way in which a revelation is, or can be, made to us." *

REPLY

We admit that we may have a real and a reasonable belief in facts told us by trustworthy informants (there is no need to give instances). It is not easy to see why we should not have real and reasonable beliefs with regard to spiritual truths, on a similar authority, or why such beliefs should be in any way useless. Thus I can believe in the value of prayer on Christ's authority, and if I pray, experiment will become experience.

Furthermore, the evidence of intrinsic excellence is NOT sufficient; we often fail to appreciate it when it is there; or we think it is there when it is not.

Not only ordinary men, but students and thinkers have differed very much about the "intrinsic reasonableness" of important truths.

Thus among modern Christians there are those who deny the value of petition, especially of petition for temporal advantages; others repudiate the idea of an individual immortality "which makes the population of heaven depend on the fluctuations of the birth-rate."

* Inge, "Faith and its Psychology."

Of course nobody denies that some men are content to believe on authority without trying to make their beliefs a matter of personal experience. But the abuse of a truth proves nothing.

(This subject is discussed more fully in the two Supplements on "Christian Authority" and on "Reason and Reasoning.")

NOTE (1): THEORIES THAT MAKE TOO MUCH OF AUTHORITY

Traditionalists sometimes press the principle of authority beyond its proper sphere. Two instances of this tendency may be noticed:

(*a*) It is said that *all Christian doctrines must be accepted on authority.* This assertion is often made in conversation; though we may not find it stated so often or so bluntly in books. It seems, however, to be implied in the current definitions of faith or belief in a certain type of books of instruction, big and little alike. These definitions take the line that faith or belief is the acceptance of doctrines on the authority of a trustworthy informant, that "believing is to accept a thing as true on the word of another." Now the Creed sums up the doctrines of Christianity, and treats them all as objects of belief. If then believing is accepting things on authority, it is on authority that all Christian doctrines are believed.

This theory, however, will not stand. It is para-

doxical, and those who put it forward are inconsistent with themselves. We can see this as follows:

Those who hold this theory assume that there is some ultimate authority—God, namely, or Christ, or, more usually, the Church—on the word of which we accept all Christian doctrines. They admit at the same time that in the Creed, God, Christ, and the Church are treated as objects of belief. We are to believe, that is, not only in what our ultimate authority tells us, but also in the ultimate authority itself. And an ultimate authority cannot be believed on the authority of something that lies behind it.

We must conclude, therefore, that all Christian doctrines are *not* accepted or believed on authority, and, incidentally, that the definition of faith or belief given above needs revision.

(*b*) *Some Christian doctrines are said to depend on authority while at the same time* (*inconsistently*) *they are used to support that authority.*

Two instances of this will suffice:

We are told to accept Christ's moral teaching as a whole on Christ's divine authority, while at the same time the excellence of that teaching is commonly made a part of the evidence that proves Him to be divine.

Similarly, we are told to accept the fact of the Resurrection on the authority of the Church, while (as in the former case) the evidence of the Resurrection is part of the evidence for Christ's divinity, and Christ's divinity is evidence for the existence and the nature of the Church.

NOTE (2): THE DANGER OF MAKING TOO MUCH OF DIRECT EXPERIENCE

"Intellectualism is the curse of religion"; so we are often told by those who exalt authority or direct experience at the expense of reason and reasoning.

It is, however, easy to exaggerate the scope of direct experience (and, as we have seen, of authority), and the exaggeration is not uncommon. We discuss the subject more fully in a supplementary chapter, but it is worth while here to notice one or two points in a preliminary way.

Certainly if our reasoning leads us to paradoxical conclusions that conflict with our experiences, or what we think are our experiences, we must revise our reasonings, and even when they are revised we may do well to hold our judgment on them in suspense.

But our experiences must be revised in their turn when they seem to conflict with our reasonings or with our authorities. All these things are meant to be taken into account; they test and corroborate each other.

After all, the danger of taking bad reasoning or bad authority for good is no greater than the danger of confusing true and false "experiences." And perhaps the danger of disparaging reasoning and authority and of exaggerating the value of our so-called "direct experiences" is the danger to which English people are most liable. It fits in with our national tendency to individualism. We pride ourselves on letting other nations be "logical," while we plume ourselves on our "genius for inconsistency and compromise." We hate

nothing so much, as Mandell Creighton once said, as an idea. A symptom of this defect is the way in which we go on repeating the conventional phrase that "a thing may be all very well in theory, but it won't work in practice"; as though a theory that doesn't work could be a good theory; as though every serious undertaking did not have to begin with a plan (which is very much the same as a theory) of the best method in which it may be carried out.

No doubt this attitude has its good side. It means that we will not let dogmatic or disquisitive people bluff or argue us out of positions that we feel to be sound and that have led to successful results, whether we can answer their objections or not. But it has a bad side also. It means that we are ultra-conservative in many matters; that we have a suspicion of all experts; that we go on year after year doing things on the old bad lines because we will not take the trouble to think out the better ways of doing them (our educational policy—or the lack of any such policy—is a case in point).

And this same tendency makes itself felt in our religion. Men who have no marked religious temperament dispense themselves from the study of religion, and wait passively in the hope that some fine day a wave of feeling will carry them to the shore. And meanwhile, by their neglect of their religious capacities, they become year by year more incapable of taking advantage of any such wave of feeling when it comes. This attitude is as common as it is dangerous; and it is undoubtedly just as dangerous as the refusal to accept the faith because

it has not been proved like a proposition in Euclid (assuming that there really are men who refuse to believe on such grounds). It is an attitude summed up in the sentence, "You either have faith or you haven't, and in either case there is no more to be said." It is an attitude that regards religion as a matter of temperament, like a taste for music—or for mustard.

Yet under the circumstances the exaggerations of extreme authoritarians, extreme rationalists, and extreme mystics all have their uses in warning us not to leave out the sides of the truth that they respectively misrepresent.

3. THE INCARNATION IS AN ACT OF GOD, AND, THEREFORE, NOT MERELY GUARANTEES, BUT CONSTITUTES IN ITSELF, A REVELATION OF GOD'S NATURE

The ACT of the Incarnation, apart from the words spoken by Christ, or over and above His words, brings home to us the character of God. It impresses on us:

(*a*) God's love for man. It was God Himself who suffered for us. God so loved the world: . . . while we were yet sinners: . . . There is no need to complete the texts.

(*b*) God's hatred of sin. The cost of the cure measures the depth of the disease.

(*c*) The condescension of God.

The idea of God as the "Great Architect of the Universe" may be true as far as it goes, but it does not express the main fact, that God loves us, and that He

longs for our love in return. And it is necessary that this should be so. We must find in God all and more that we find in the best men who win our deepest loyalty. What are such men like? They are strong; they are raised above us by their talents and their goodness. But if they keep their distance from us, if we feel that our love or dislike is to them a matter of serene indifference, our loyalty never reaches the highest levels. We want to feel that our love can make them glad, and that our dislike or sin can make them suffer. That is why the officer in Kipling's story, who spends a whole night in hospital with a not particularly attractive soldier, wins the passionate loyalty of his men. The object of our profoundest loyalty must combine the forcefulness of the Sovereign with the tenderness of the ideal mother who will suffer with, and is hurt by, the sorrows and sins of an irresponsive child.

What we wish to find in the men who claim our loyalty we wish also to find in God—condescension combined with strength. God would not be omnipotent if He were debarred from winning in this way our loyalty—if His Fatherhood did not contain in itself the essence of motherhood—if He were incapable of appealing to us in any of those ways which make human appeals impressive.

The loving condescension by which the Almighty allows Himself to suffer at the hands of men seemed undignified to the heathen; but the King's true disciples, looking back in the light of the Resurrection, feel that the Christ who submitted to Pilate's decision, by that

very submission won His way to victory. Not reluctantly, like the Roman Emperor of a later day, but gladly, they confess: "Thou hast conquered, O Galilean." It is written on the Cross, and it is written in their hearts, that the Crucified is the King of the Universe. It is the King on a Cross who can convert the world.

No exhibition of mere power could have done that. Christ won men's loyalty by a method all His own. He convinced them, as the author of "Ecce Homo" says, "that He was a Person of altogether transcendent greatness, One Who needed nothing at their hands, and that, being so great, He had devoted Himself out of mere benevolence to their good. They saw Him hungry, though they believed Him able to turn the stones into bread; they saw His royal pretensions spurned, though they believed He could in a moment take into His hands all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them; they saw Him die, though they believed that, had He so willed it, no danger could harm Him, and that had He thrown Himself from the topmost pinnacle of the Temple He would have been softly received in the arms of ministering angels. Thus their hearts were touched, and pity for weakness blending with wondering admiration of unlimited power, a passion of gratitude, sympathy, and astonishment sprang up in them. Gratitude broke forth in joyful obedience to His precepts, self-denial produced self-denial, and the Law and the Lawgiver were enshrined in their hearts for inseparable veneration."

(*d*) Contrast of Christian and heathen views.

The heathen view of God (commonly, if not universally, held) helps us by way of contrast to realize the value of the Christian revelation.

The Stoics, for instance, made God resemble their ideal of humanity. The ideal man was the philosopher. It was undignified for the philosopher to be much moved by deep emotion. He must preserve his calm in the midst of human sorrow and sin. Pity was only fitted " for old women and girls " ; anger was equally unsuitable. To be tolerant like the sun which shines alike on the evil and the good—that was the ideal. The philosopher must be self-sufficient, tranquil, apathetic. The gods, too, must have this philosophic attitude. Tennyson sums up their attitude :

> . . . *the gods who haunt*
> *The lucid interspace of world and world,*
> *Where never creeps a cloud nor moves a wind, . . .*
> *Nor sound of human sorrow mounts to mar*
> *Their sacred everlasting calm.**

A modern writer gives us the same impression when he describes God in impersonal terms as " the power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness."

But neither an apathetic God nor an impersonal God is an appropriate object for heartfelt loyalty.

* What Tennyson puts into the mouth of Lucretius the Epicurean is not fundamentally different from the creed of the Stoics so far as they believed in a personal divinity at all.

4. THE INCARNATION IS A REVELATION, NOT ONLY OF GOD'S NATURE, BUT OF GOD HIMSELF

The Incarnation has not only brought home to us truths about God's character; it has given us a realization of God Himself in a way that nothing else could do.

I do not get the sense of a man's personal reality from being told about his characteristics; nor do I get it through knowledge of his official routine—in that way I only know him as an official. But if I know of acts and deeds he has done, over and above his official routine, his personality is brought before me more vividly.

From the good order and progress and contentment of a State, we may perhaps infer the existence and goodness of its ruler, although he holds himself aloof from his subjects, although we know of no one who has seen or spoken to him. But it makes all the difference if the ruler leaves his privacy, shares in the hardships of his subjects, fights in their battles, visits some of them in their homes; if, in a word, he breaks through his official routine and reveals himself in definite deeds and actions.

Similarly, we may know truths about God on the authority of an informant, or by inference from the laws of nature. We may know that He is working somewhere in the background, and that in a dim way we are conscious of Him as the foundation and end of our loyalty. There is a God, we may conclude, immanent in the Universe, and on Whom the Universe depends. But such knowledge is too impersonal and abstract to

be satisfactory. A God Who works everywhere in general and nowhere in particular is not the God Whom we need.

It makes all the difference to our knowledge of God if He has interrupted His working in the processes of nature by definite acts and deeds done on our behalf—acts and deeds of which we can say, "Lo; this is the finger of God; this hath God done; behold, it is His work." And chief among such acts of God is the act of the Incarnation.

If this is true, the statement made by so many writers to the effect that the prophets represent the high-water mark of revelation in Old Testament times seems open to criticism.

The highest form of revelation does not consist in what any prophet, however well informed, tells us about God; it consists rather in acts or deeds done by God Himself, which bring home to us the sense of God's reality.

The prophets themselves seem to take this line. What they have to say is based on the fact that God has already revealed Himself to the nation in His divine guidance of the nation's history, and, on the traditional view, in the miracles by which that history is characterized.

The writer of Deuteronomy, at any rate, makes it a main feature in the privileges of Israel that God has revealed Himself in this open and outward way.

Doubtless the great prophets are the high-water mark of the Old Testament in regard to the extent in which

God's revelation was understood and applied. The people who saw the events to which the Deuteronomist referred did not know what those events meant so well as he did.

Nevertheless it was the events, not the prophet's interpretation of them, that constituted, *par excellence*, the revelation.

It is this revelation of God in deed and act, in the miracles of the Old Testament perhaps, but mainly in the Incarnation, that make it possible for us, not merely to know about God, but to know God with a personal knowledge. However we account for it, the heathen, who were often religious men, never reached that sense of personal knowledge of God, or that sense of His love shown in what He has done and suffered. They made no approach to that sense of longing for communion with God felt by the Psalmist—and felt still more strongly by the Christian world—"My soul is athirst for God—like as the hart desireth the water brooks, so longeth my soul after Thee, O God." It is narrow-minded, in the face of these patent distinctions, to lump all religions into one, and to say that, as long as men are convinced of their truth, they are all of equal value.

Heathen thinkers had from time to time the thought of the overruling care and love of a Personal God, but the thought was only a thought after all, and a man's thoughts cannot bridge the gap between himself and God; and so the heathen rarely reached that sense of friendship with God, that intimacy and intercourse, which the Christian is meant to enjoy.

He lacked the grounds of confidence provided by the Incarnation, by which God becomes to the Christian the most real of all realities.

He was holding himself in the air by his own mental efforts. God to him was the conclusion of an argument, not the God Who had met his search half-way. His position was a precarious position. And he could never get the mass of his contemporaries to share with him even the modicum of confidence which he himself possessed.

5. THE INCARNATION IS A REVELATION BECAUSE, BY UNITING US TO CHRIST, IT INSPIRES US WITH SOMETHING OF CHRIST'S WISDOM, SO THAT WE CAN UNDERSTAND WHAT HE REVEALS

6. THE INCARNATION IS A REVELATION BECAUSE, BY UNITING US TO CHRIST, IT MAKES POSSIBLE A DIRECT EXPERIENCE OF GOD WORKING WITHIN OUR HEARTS

(The last two points are discussed incidentally in the chapter on "Christ as the Means of Grace.")

CHAPTER XIX

THE WITNESS OF MODERN POETRY

Browning, Newman, F. Thomson.

MODERN poetry enforces many of the points that we have made in the preceding chapters.

1. THE IMPRESSIVENESS OF THE INCARNATION

The sceptic may deny the evidence for the fact of the Incarnation, but he can see its impressiveness, as Karshish, the Arabian physician, did, in Browning's story. Karshish has been travelling in Palestine in the interests, as we should say, of scientific research, and he writes an account of his travels to Abib, a fellow-physician. He has met a Jew called Lazarus, a sane enough man at first sight, but in reality quite mad, on one point at least, for he actually thinks that he has died, and that he was raised from the dead by a certain sage, a Nazarene.

Lazarus goes further (Karshish can hardly bring himself to repeat it, but he will hold nothing back from a fellow-physician):

> *This man so cured regards the curer, then,*
> *As, God forgive me—Who but God Himself.*

Of course all this is absurd, and he passes on to more

important matters—scientific details about the new herbs he has discovered, " the blue flowering borage, the Aleppo sort," and so on. Yet he cannot get away from Lazarus and his story ; at the end of his letter he recurs to it again :

The very God ; think, Abib, dost thou think ?
So the all-wise were the all-loving too—
So through the thunder comes a human voice
Saying, " O heart I made, a heart beats here !
Face, my hands fashioned, see it in myself !
Thou hast no power nor mayst conceive of mine,
But love I gave thee, with myself to love,
And thou must love me who have died for thee ! "—
The madman saith he said so : it is strange.

2. THE UNION OF POWER AND CONDESCENSION IN THE INCARNATION

In Christ we see the " strong Son of God " made man for man's sake, bearing the burden of man's sin.

Browning has summed the case up in the words he puts into David's mouth as he prophesies before Saul of the Christ to come :

Would I suffer for him that I love ? So wouldst Thou ; so wilt Thou !
'Tis the weakness in strength that I long for ; my flesh that I seek
In the Godhead : I seek and I find it. O Saul, it shall be
A face like my face that receives thee ; a Man like to me

Thou shalt love, and be loved by for ever ; a Hand like this hand
Shall throw open the gates of new life to thee. See the Christ stand !

3. THE URGENCY OF RESPONSE TO THE INCARNATION

If we admit the Christian facts, we must admit the truth of Newman's description of the way in which the penitent soul realizes its condition when those facts are brought before it :

There is a pleading in His pensive eyes
Will pierce thee to the quick, and trouble thee ;
And thou wilt hate and loathe thyself (to think)
That One so sweet should e'er have placed Himself
At disadvantage such, as to be used
So vilely by a being so vile as thou.

4. THE CONSEQUENCES OF DISLOYALTY

The " Hound of Heaven " brings out the inevitable disillusionment of those who consciously reject God's advances :

I fled from those strong feet that followed, followed after ;
But with unhurrying chase,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy
They beat . . . and a Voice beat
More instant than the Feet,
" All things betray thee who betrayest Me : . . .
Naught shelters thee who wilt not shelter Me : . . .
Lo ! Naught contents thee who contents not Me."

Christ has made good His claim to our personal devotion. There is an appeal from the power of a tyrant, even though that power is unlimited—an appeal to the eternal principles of right and wrong: "Though the tyrant destroy me, yet I am greater than the tyrant, for I know, and he does not, that right is on my side, and that I am on the side of right." But there is no appeal from perfect power combined with perfect love, as they are combined in Christ. If we reject divine love, we have rejected something which lies behind and above everything. God is all-loving and all-merciful, but that gives us no grounds for taking lightly the consequence of disobedience. Just *because* "there is mercy with Thee," *therefore* "shalt thou be feared."

CHAPTER XX

CHRIST THE MEANS OF GRACE: THE CHRISTIAN VIEW STATED

Grace is Christ's life working in us; it is contrasted with extraneous help, human or divine.

1. HUMAN NEEDS

PLATO's illustration comes to our mind again:

We need more than human notions, we need some word of God on which, as on a raft, we may sail securely through life. The two things must be kept distinct. We need not only knowledge, but the means, the raft, by which we can act on what we know. Christ claims to be the Word by which we know God with a personal knowledge, and also the Means of New Life (the Giver of Grace) by which we can be loyal to God and to His laws.

We carry about with us everywhere the portable idol of ourselves. We know how easy it is to devote ourselves to the pursuit of sensual pleasures and of self-interest in the vulgar form of lust for power, property, popularity, and the like.

We have seen also, what is not so obvious, how easy it is to devote ourselves to our own higher selves, to the cultivation of our own perfection for perfection's sake, and how such devotion is only, after all, a refined form of selfishness.

2. CHRISTIAN GRACE

We cannot escape from this inveterate selfishness by efforts of our own apart from grace.

A sinner (and we are all sinners) has made sin so much a part of himself that he cannot repent of it as he ought; he cannot even get a start on the path of devotion.

An illustration will show us what this gift of new life or grace means, and how it differs from ordinary help that we receive from our fellow-men. A clever teacher cannot give us his own cleverness—he cannot put his brains into our heads. A good soldier cannot put his courage into our hearts. In a word, human helpers can do something to make us good by teaching and example, but they cannot put their own goodness, their own life, into us; and even if they could, their wisdom, courage, and goodness are at the best imperfect. But to impart to us His own perfect life is precisely what Christ came to do.

We are united to Him as the branches of a vine are united to the vine. "I am the Vine, ye are the branches." St. Paul says that we are united to Christ as the members of our body are united to our body. Thus, as the sap flows from the root of a vine through the trunk into the branches, and as the blood flows from the heart into our limbs, so Christ's life flows into us.

The life of Christ working in our hearts is what we mean by Grace.

3. THE WORK OF GRACE A GRADUAL WORK

By union with Christ we do not become good all at once, but the gift of grace sown in our hearts brings forth in time the fruit of perfection.

Meanwhile God looks on us as we are in Christ, and accepts us for what we are growing to be rather than for our actual attainments.

CHAPTER XXI

THE VALUE OF GRACE: EVIDENCE OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

On the Christian view it is fitting or even necessary that grace should be given us through Christ—through the Incarnation.

Objection

The Incarnation unnecessary as a means of Grace.

We need Divine help, but there is no need of the Incarnation; all the help we need comes to us direct from God. As Tennyson says:

We needs must love the highest when we see it,

and if we love what is best we shall naturally try to do what is best. If we know God and His laws, our own strength of will, together with His help which always co-operates with our efforts, enables us to love, obey, and trust Him as we ought.

The Incarnation may have been necessary as a means of *Revelation*. It gave us knowledge of God and of His laws, and a perfect example to teach and inspire us. But our power to follow Christ's example does not depend on our union with Him, or on help derived through that union. "We are to believe with Christ,"

as Harnack says, not to believe IN Christ; that is, we are to believe and trust in God as He did, and the help that strengthened Him will strengthen us.

REPLY

(*a*) *The insufficiency of our efforts, apart from the Incarnation.*

In many cases men, being unwilling to serve God, have wished that God did not exist; the wish has become the father to the thought; and so, in St. Paul's words, they have "refused to have God in their knowledge."

Even if a man still believes, he has to confess, like Ovid, "I see the right road, but I take the wrong"; or, like St. Paul, "The good which I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I practise. For to will is present with me, but to do that which is good is not."

So far from loving the highest when he sees it, he may come to hate it, just because it is the highest, just because it is so unlike himself, just because he does not intend to be loyal to its claims.

Even though our efforts are never merely our own efforts (since God always co-operates with them, as the objector truly says, when they are right efforts) yet, even so, apart from the Incarnation we are not able to love, serve, and trust God as we ought.

If Christ is only an example, that example is likely not so much to inspire our efforts as to fill us with despair by its unattainable perfection.

Again, if Christ were only an example, there would be

no real need for the fact of His having ever existed. The story of Christ, not the fact of Christ, is all that we should need.

No doubt a good life is more effective than the mere story of a good life for the men who actually witness that life. But for us, who (on this example theory) have the story only, it would make no difference whether the story were historically true or not.

At any rate, fiction, as long as it is *believed* to be a fact, is, for the purpose of an example, as useful as though it were really fact. If there is no question of any personal relationship existing at the present moment between myself and a hero of the past, then, as long as I am convinced he existed, the fact that I am mistaken makes no difference. It is my belief, and not the object of my belief, that influences me.

On the example theory, therefore, Christ's existence is a matter of indifference. This conclusion is not often faced. When it is faced, it seems paradoxical.

(*b*) *The evidence of Christian conviction as to the results of Grace.*

The Apostles were familiar with the fact that help comes from God. They were also convinced that the help given them through Christ exceeded all the help they had known before. Christ was working with them. He was more than with them, He was in them, and they were in Him. As St. Paul says again: "I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ that liveth in me. I can do all things through Him that strengtheneth me."

The witness of the Apostles is endorsed by the

experience of Christians in all ages. They are sure that they are united to each other through Christ, and through Christ to God :

> *Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.*

The presence of God, " the Absolute " (about which Tennyson's poem speaks), is mediated to us through the presence of Christ.

What the Greek deity offered He offers in fullest measure :

> *O rest thee sure*
> *That I shall love thee well and cleave to thee,*
> *So that my vigour, wedded to thy blood,*
> *Shall strike within thy pulses like a god's,*
> *To push thee forward through a life of shocks,*
> *Dangers and deeds, until endurance grows*
> *Sinewed with action.*

Thus we can thank God that we are " very members incorporate in the mystical body of His Son." Considering how much men's lives have been conformed to the life of Christ, it is only reasonable that we should pay respect to their account of the secret force by which their lives are inspired.

CHAPTER XXII

THE VALUE OF GRACE AND THE SACRAMENTAL PRINCIPLE

Spiritual realities come into vital contact with us through human and outward means. The Incarnation is the supreme example of this principle. Objections that God's " direct " help is sufficient, and that outward means are " unspiritual."

1. THE SACRAMENTAL PRINCIPLE

We mean by the Sacramental Principle that God, the great Spirit, comes into vital contact with us (i.e. influences us, makes Himself known to us, and unites us to Himself) through human friendships and relationships. In particular, in accordance with this method of action, He comes into vital contact with us by embodying Himself in the Incarnation.

2. SACRAMENTAL MEANS OF UNION NEEDED

Objection

The closest vital contact with God does not necessarily involve outward means. Such outward means are not fitting or necessary in a spiritual religion. They are meant to be superseded by direct contact with God.

Reply

Vital contact with personal beings demands more than purely spiritual means for its perfection.

We admit this in the case of our fellow-men. Tennyson has written of the possibility of intercourse with the spirits of those we love :

No visual shape of some one lost,
But he the spirit himself may come
When all the nerve of sense is numb ;
Spirit to spirit, ghost to ghost.

Yet such intercourse fails to give satisfaction ; and so the same writer says in another place that we need

The touch of a vanished hand
And the sound of a voice that is still.

This imperious necessity is brought out in the story of Sir A. Conan Doyle's. An old man is described as anxiously waiting for the return of his wife. Meanwhile he had struck up an acquaintanceship with the doctor. He tells him how long he and his wife have been married ; how seldom they have been parted, and how much, in the evening of his life, he feels the separation of even a few days. While they talk the woman appeared in the distance, and the doctor wonders whether she was as he said, or whether his description corresponded only to some ideal carried in his brain. " My heart sank," he writes, " as I thought how little she might appreciate him, how unworthy she might be of his love. . . . She came up the path in her solid way, while he staggered along to meet her. Then as they came together, looking discreetly out of the furthest corner of my eye, I saw that he put out both his hands, while she, shrinking

from a public caress, took one of them in hers and shook it. As she did so I saw her face, and I was easy in my mind for my old man. God grant that when this hand is shaking, and this back bowed, some friendly eyes may so look into mine."

Men have bodies and they live in a material world. Matter is meant to be, not the enemy, but the servant of spirit, of mind, will, and feelings. We express our thoughts and our feelings by our looks, by bodily actions, and by the things we make, and in this way, by expressing them, we both bring them home to other men, and at the same time intensify them in ourselves.

The beginner tries to describe the passion of true love by a copious use of abstract words—tenderness, affection, sympathy, and the like—and at the end we are as far off as ever from grasping the reality. The artist brings the reality home to us by outward facts and events in which it is enshrined. It is not love unembodied that is the inspiration of a life. It is the home, it is the thousand acts of family life, the faces, the expression, the touch of a hand—love manifested, love embodied, love incarnate, that goes with us wherever we go, and drives us on with irresistible urgency to teach by word and example the lesson of love which we have learned from those who love us.

These outward human relationships exist between us and God, not as a barrier, but as a bridge. It would be perverse and paradoxical to blame men because they value such relationships. God does not want us to do without them. They are channels by which His help

comes to us. They are means which take us, if we use them rightly, beyond themselves to Him.

We are not meant to come to God by ceasing to be human beings, by stripping off all these human relationships (we could not do so if we tried), but by using them as steps to draw us nearer Him. They are not to be discarded even when we have come into contact with the Being to Whom they point. It is true that the help of God can do more for us than the help of men. But His help is not meant to supersede their help, but to work through their help. The greatest saint need never lose his sense of the value of human intercourse, human sympathy, and human encouragement.

It follows, further, that human outward relationships are not "marks of an unspiritual religion." A religion is not spiritual because it discards what is outward and human. It is spiritual because it consecrates what is outward and human in God's service.

We realize our self-insufficiency better by being dependent on other human beings. If we had to depend on God apart from these outward means of union with Him, we should more easily lose sight of this dependence. Human help is outward and tangible and is an antidote against that trust in self which is so contrary to Christian humility.

3. THE INCARNATION THE SUPREME EXAMPLE OF SACRAMENTAL MEANS OF UNION

Objection

Even if we admit that outward means are fitting and necessary, it does not follow that the Incarnation must

be numbered among these means. Human friendships and human relationships, together with prayer and efforts of our own (with which, of course, God co-operates), are all that is needed for the closest vital contact with God.

REPLY

What applies to human help in general applies *a fortiori* to the Incarnation.

If human friendships and human relationships help to unite us to God, so much the more are we united to Him by our relationship to Christ, Who is at the same time perfect God and perfect Man.

Thus the sacramental principle, embodied in the Incarnation, is the means by which devotion to God is made possible. God is love, and Christ is love Incarnate; through Christ we get into vital contact with God. He brings to us, not only, as we have seen, personal knowledge of God, but union with God through union with Himself. By the Incarnation God entered into finite human conditions. The Omnipresent became present to men in a way in which He had not been present before. And in the same degree men became more present to God. "The Son of God became Man, that men might become the sons of God."

The story of the Prodigal sums up what we have said. He repented and "came to himself." But "coming to himself" does not mean that he lived by himself and for himself or that the right state of a man is a state of isolation. On the contrary, coming to himself involved

the resolution: "I will arise and go to my father, and say unto him, I have sinned against heaven and before thee." Coming to himself, in other words, means going beyond himself, and coming to God. And coming to God includes coming to his earthly father. The process of conversion is not a matter that lies between the individual soul and God; still less does it regard the soul as existing by itself. It is the putting of ourselves right with our fellow-men and with God's Church.

CHAPTER XXIII

CHRIST THE MEANS OF PARDON THROUGH HIS WORK IN US

Our penitence is perfected by Christ's perfect "penitence" working in us. Christ's perfect penitence is necessarily connected with His Passion viewed as disciplinary pain.

1. PARDON DEPENDS ON PENITENCE

THE modern prodigal, after leading a rotten, sensual, selfish life for some ten years, fell in love, and resolved to make a fresh start. He had no doubts as to his power of doing as he intended, and his resolution gave him a feeling of acute self-satisfaction. It was all so simple. The past, as he assured his friends, was blotted out; he need never think of it again. There was no need of prayer, still less of the Church's ministrations. Being quite sure that a man could not forgive sins, he proceeded promptly to forgive his own. With more than Papal autocracy he took the future under his own control, and gave himself a plenary absolution for the past.

Yet Christian conviction for immemorial ages has run counter to this modern prodigal. The blotting out of sin is not so easily accomplished. In spite of the fact that "the modern man" (according to Sir Oliver

Lodge) "is not worrying about his sins," but prefers "to be up and doing," leaving the past to take care of itself, repentance, whether it can be proved so or not, is a necessary condition of pardon.

2. OUR PENITENCE IS IMPERFECT

I have familiarized myself with sin. I have made it at home in myself. It has darkened my mind, weakened my will, and chilled my feelings. I cannot know it, resist it, hate it, and be ashamed of it, as I ought. The disease has taken away the power of recovery. My penitence, my sense of sin, is imperfect and inadequate.

3. OUR PENITENCE DEPENDS ON CHRIST'S WORK IN US IMPARTING TO US HIS OWN PERFECT PENITENCE

Just as devotion depends on Christ's work in us so also does our repentance. Only the perfect man can feel an adequate sense of sin, and the only perfect Man is Christ. He united us to Himself so that by His work in us we may feel the same sense of sin as He does.

It is true that our sense of sin is never perfect in this life; but Christ's sense of sin exists within us as a seed, and God takes our repentance for what it is growing to be, or rather He sees what it is growing to be as a part of what it is.

4. CONCLUSION: OUR PARDON DEPENDS ON CHRIST'S WORK IN US IMPARTING TO US HIS PERFECT PENITENCE

NOTE: The preceding sections are an attempt to summarize the line of thought followed by Moberly in his "Atonement and Personality."

The phrase "Christ's penitence" occurs frequently in Moberly's book. Critics have objected to it as implying (if taken strictly) sinfulness on the part of Christ. The objections, however, do not seem to affect the substance of the argument, if we use the phrase, as he did, in the sense of Christ's hatred and shame for a sin that was not His own.

5. CHRIST'S PERFECT PENITENCE WAS NECESSARILY CONNECTED WITH THE PASSION

(*a*) One element in the pain of the Passion consisted in, or was caused by, Christ's *penitential pain.* Penitence must, in the nature of the case, be painful; and Christ's "penitence," being perfect, was painful in the highest possible degree.

(*b*) Another element in the pain of the Passion consisted in what we may call *disciplinary pain*; the pain, that is, that caused, or developed, or deepened, the pain of penitence.

This disciplinary pain consisted in the bodily pain of the crucifixion together with the mental pain that accompanied it, due, for instance, to the hostility of enemies and the desertion of friends.

OBJECTION

The Passion of Christ was not necessary as disciplinary pain. He always hated sin as much as it could be hated. His sense of its evil was always complete. Disciplinary pain may be necessary to complete human repentance; but it was not necessary in the case of Christ.

REPLY

Christ, according to the New Testament, was capable of spiritual as well as of bodily growth. He grew in wisdom as well as in stature. Being Man He grew as men do. Discipline was necessary for Him as for them. Just as He "learned obedience," so also He learned penitence, "by the things that He suffered."

Thus Christ's perfect penitence was necessarily connected with the pain of the Passion, partly as cause, partly as effect.

6. CONCLUSION: OUR PARDON DEPENDS ON THE PASSION

Our pardon depends on our penitence; our penitence on Christ's penitence; Christ's penitence is necessarily connected with His Passion; and, therefore, our pardon depends ultimately on the Passion.

OBJECTION

If a perfect sense of sin involves the intensity of pain that was felt by Christ, and if His perfect sense of sin must be imparted to us to make our repentance adequate,

then we too must suffer pain of the same degree of intensity.

But as a matter of fact even the most sincerely penitent men do not suffer this degree of pain. Therefore :

Either this intensity of pain is not involved in a perfect sense of sin, and was therefore not necessary in Christ or in us ;

Or (if it is so involved) in our case God must put up with something less than perfect repentance, and Christ's sense of sin is not imparted to us, either in the germ or in its fully developed state.

The Passion was in either case unnecessary.

Reply

We have no means of knowing what degree of penitential pain man may have to undergo before his penitence is complete. The process is not completed in this present life, and the conditions of the intermediate state are beyond our knowledge.

It is enough for us to know that the process is begun, and that God will look after the results.

CHAPTER XXIV

CHRIST THE MEANS OF PARDON THROUGH HIS WORK FOR US

Our pardon depends on something over and above our penitence, i.e. on Christ's work for us as our priest and intercessor.

OUR PARDON DEPENDS ON CHRIST'S WORK FOR US AS OUR SACRIFICE AND INTERCESSOR (OVER AND ABOVE WHAT HE DOES IN US IN PERFECTING OUR PENITENCE)

We can summarize the argument in a sentence: Christ sacrificed Himself for us on the Cross, and His presence in Heaven constitutes an eternal sacrifice, an eternal act of intercession, which avails for our pardon.

The fact of the Atonement is not only a matter of immediate experience, still less is it an arbitrary doctrine to be accepted on the authority of the Church and the Bible. It harmonizes with principles and practices which we are sure are valid and valuable. One of these practices is the practice of intercession—of prayer—for our fellow-men. In all religions we find the assurance that intercession is right and reasonable, although it is open to many of the same objections which are brought against the fact of the Atonement.

Now the Atonement is, from one point of view, just

the supreme example of this principle or practice of intercession. The presence of a good mother who has suffered much for her wilful children is itself an appeal for their forgiveness; the marks of suffering left on her face themselves plead on their behalf, and lend weight to her prayers. Her presence is in itself a silent intercession, none the less real although it may not be expressed in words. So it is with Christ. On the cross He was our priest. He offered there a perfect sacrifice. His death summed up the sacrifice that He had offered all His life—the sacrifice or offering of perfect love, obedience, and hatred for human sin.

And Christ is still presenting this same sacrifice. He remains, as we are told, and as we see He must remain, "a priest for ever." And, being a priest, He must be making a sacrifice—He "must have somewhat to offer"—and the sacrifice He still offers is the sacrifice of Himself.

He is not being crucified again, but, like the mother in the illustration, He is offering or presenting before God His sufferings on the Cross. As the mother by the mere fact of being what she is and having done what she has done pleads for her son, so Christ, who remains for ever perfect Man as well as perfect God, pleads for us wherever He is, in Heaven and on earth (as we shall see hereafter) in the Holy Eucharist.

And, considering what He is and what He has done, Christ's intercession, His sacrifice, has infinite weight on our behalf.

(For further discussion of this subject, see chapters in the Supplement.)

CHAPTER XXV

THE RESURRECTION

Christ's work as the means of knowledge, grace, and pardon involves the Resurrection. Need of a bodily Resurrection and of the non-corruption of Christ's Body.

1. THE TRADITIONAL VIEW OF THE NATURE AND VALUE OF THE RESURRECTION

CHRIST rose from the dead the third day. His Body did not decay in the ordinary course of nature, nor did it remain in the tomb. Christ's risen Body was a REAL Body and the SAME Body which died on the Cross, although it was a *glorified* and *spiritual* Body; and in this Body He appeared to His disciples. And the Resurrection is a necessary part of the Christian Creed.

2. THE WORK OF CHRIST AS MEANS OF GRACE AND PARDON DEPENDS ON THE RESURRECTION

The practical necessity of the Resurrection follows from the practical necessity of the Incarnation regarded as a means of union with God. The centre of Christianity is not the teaching of Christ, but the person of Christ—Christ Himself. The essence of Christianity consists, as we have seen, in personal relationship—personal union—with Christ. It is through union with Christ that we get the grace that is needed to live the

Christian life. Apart from the Resurrection union with Christ would be impossible.

OBJECTION

We believe that Christ is alive and that He rose from the dead. But the Resurrection was a spiritual Resurrection. It is enough for us to believe that the soul of Christ lived after death just as the souls of men live after death. A bodily Resurrection is not needed at all.

REPLY

Our union with Christ, and through Christ with God, depends, as we have just said, on the Incarnation—on Christ being perfect God and perfect Man. If our union is to be a permanent union—possible for men in all ages—the fact of the Incarnation must be an eternal fact. Christ must still be God and Man. But if the Resurrection was not a bodily Resurrection, Christ is not man, for a body of some sort or other is an essential part of our manhood. For the purposes, therefore, of union with Christ a bodily Resurrection seems to be needful.

3. A VISIBLE BODILY RESURRECTION HAS A REVELATIONAL VALUE

OBJECTION

Christ's character and claims are all we need to make us believe in His Resurrection, in His Divinity, and in the fact of His continued risen existence. At any rate

these considerations are sufficient when we add to them the Resurrection appearances viewed as visions sent by God, and also the " direct experience " of the fact that Christ is alive and that we are united to Him. Some even go so far as to say, as Dale does, that such experience is sufficient in itself, all other evidence apart.

Reply

The visible bodily Resurrection is an act of God. It is just such outward acts that makes God a living reality to us. By such acts He breaks through His " official routine "—by interrupting the ordinary processes of nature. The Incarnation and the Resurrection (which is of a piece with the Incarnation) are the highest instances of such acts. By their means we get to know, not merely about God, but God himself. By their means He brings his personal reality home to us.

Again, from the evidence of the Incarnation alone we might know something of Christ's love, but we should not be assured of His power. His efforts to put Himself out for our welfare might seem to have ended in failure. It was the Resurrection which made it possible to know for certain that God's power as well as God's love is triumphant.

The objector, as Dr. Holland writes, may say : " Give me Calvary. Give me the love of God, perfected without miracle, on the Cross ; and that is enough." We reply : " Historically, it was not enough. It did not suffice to create the faith. It did not make manifest to those who saw in it the love of God. Judged by the

actual evidence of fact, the Cross blotted out the signs of the love of God. It was the end of hope and faith. Evil had finally triumphed; God had lost. Men and women, who had clung on desperately to the last, turned away from Calvary to hide themselves in the dust and die."

The majority of men would find it too hard in the long run to believe that the Incarnation was an eternal reality if Christ died as other men die without visible bodily evidence of His having risen again.

There are those who claim that their direct experience of the living Christ is all that they need. But it is doubtful whether their faith would remain secure if it did not depend unconsciously on other evidence as well, or on the influence of other believers.

Objection

Beliefs essential to the Christian life cannot in the nature of the case rest on historical evidence. Only a minority of men are able to appreciate that evidence. Many of those who do appreciate it deny that it is conclusive.

Reply

The historical evidence is not the whole of the evidence. It must be taken together with the character and claims of Christ, and with our conviction of its practical necessity. It is not the whole of the evidence, but it is a part, and a necessary part, of the evidence.

Further, it is not necessary that the historical evidence

should in itself be conclusive. We do not say that the historical evidence for the Resurrection proves the Resurrection, but we do say that the *absence* of any such evidence would be a great difficulty. We think on other grounds that the Resurrection was fitting and even practically necessary, and we expect therefore to have some historical evidence that it happened. We get that evidence; and these lines of reasoning, taken together, give us a valid ground for our faith.

4. THE EMPTY TOMB AND THE INCORRUPTION OF CHRIST'S BODY HAVE A REVELATIONAL VALUE

Objection

Christ's earthly Body may have decayed like the bodies of ordinary men. For our Resurrection bodies, on the traditional view, will be real bodies, and in some sense the same bodies that we had before death, in spite of their decay. Christ, therefore, may not, and need not, have risen in a different manner from that in which we rise; His Resurrection may have been a real and bodily resurrection although His body decayed as ours do. On this theory His Resurrection is even more impressive than it is on the traditional view. A body that rises after having decayed is just as wonderful and just as miraculous (if we use the word) as a body that rises without suffering decay. The historical evidence for the Resurrection consists in the Resurrection appearances; the evidence of the empty tomb is immaterial.

REPLY

The objection is plausible, and has not been discussed as fully as it deserves by modern theologians.

It is true that, on this theory, we might still have a real bodily resurrection, and real union with an Incarnate Christ, just as we have on the traditional view. Nevertheless the revelational value of the Resurrection would be to some extent impaired. It would be harder to believe that the Resurrection appearances were not illusory if Christ's Body had decayed in the course of nature. Also it seems a fitting manifestation of God's power and of Christ's Divinity that Christ's Body should not have been subject to the processes of decay.

From the point of view we are taking—that is, of the practical value of the Christian claims—it seems hard to say anything more definite than this. The historical question is of course another matter. It may be impossible to account for the Apostles' belief without the evidence of the empty tomb, and it does not seem likely that their belief should have been allowed to rest on mistaken foundations.

5. THE ASCENSION

On the traditional view we must distinguish between the ascended life of Christ regarded as an eternal *fact* and the historical *act* of the Ascension.

(*a*) *The ascended life of Christ.*

When we speak of Christ sitting at the right hand of God we mean that He exists in a state of glory;

that though He is still Man, He is no longer subject to the human limitations of His earthly ministry; and that He is exercising to the full His divine prerogatives. To know that this is so has practical value; it deepens our reverence for Christ, and our trust in Him.

It is, furthermore, a state in which Christ's visible presence has been withdrawn from His disciples, although He is still with them, and not only with them, but in them, and they in Him. And this new relationship is a gain, not a loss. It was good for them, as He said Himself, that He should in one sense "go away," so that in another more real, more intimate sense, He might come to them again. And they realized this themselves; they were not disheartened when the withdrawal took place; on the contrary, as the narrative says explicitly, they "returned to Jerusalem with great joy," and when they began their work they were conscious that the Lord was working with them.

The idea that Heaven is a place, that Christ as Man is ascended in the sense of being somewhere spatially "above" us, or, at any rate, spatially distant from us, is an idea that is widely held, but is difficult to grasp, and to which it is also difficult to attach any definite value. We are, at any rate, safe in laying stress on the ascended life as a state of glory.

(*b*) *The historic act or event of the Ascension.*

It is customary to compare Christ's Ascension to the coronation of a king. The crowning of a king does not occur at the first moment that he becomes a king, neither does it make him a king. (It is because he is a

king already that he is crowned.) The coronation is a symbolical act expressing his royalty.

Similarly, Christ's glorified state, His ascended life, His session at God's right hand, may have begun immediately after His Resurrection. We need not think that the act of the Ascension marked His first entrance to His glory. But in any case the Ascension was an appropriate method of symbolizing that glory. It had a revelational value. It was an act in time that signified an eternal fact.

We may say, at the same time, that, even if the act of Ascension had not taken place, the permanent fact of Christ's ascended state would not necessarily be affected; and we should still have good evidence for the reality of that state—the evidence, namely, of the Resurrection appearances, of the empty tomb, and of the conviction of Christians as to their present communion with their Lord. This evidence, as we have seen in the present chapter, points to the fact of a Christ who is not merely risen, but glorified.

Objection

The historic act of the Ascension was not an appropriate method for symbolizing Christ's glorified life. The narrative involves the erroneous ideas that Heaven is a place, and a place immediately above the place from which Christ went up; that Christ moved in a local spatial sense from the one place to the other; and that He exists at present in His Manhood in a place the distance of which from us might be measured

by yards and miles. These ideas are alien from our modern ways of thinking, and are without practical value.

Reply

The act of the Ascension does not necessarily involve these ideas. It is quite fitting and customary to speak of changes of state in spatial language. Thus we habitually talk of "higher" standards of life; of a man "looking upwards," when no question of spatial movement enters our mind.

It is only another application of the same principle when spatial actions are used (as well as spatial terminology) to express what is essentially spiritual. Thus a throne is naturally placed at a higher level than the floor of the room in which it stands. And so, in the present instance, "going upwards" was an appropriate action to express a change of spiritual condition. And there is nothing in the narrative to suggest how far this spatial movement was continued, or that it was continued at all. On the contrary, the mention of the cloud that received Christ out of the sight of His disciples makes us feel, and may have been intended to make us feel, that we are not to press the spatial symbolism too far; that questions about the distance and direction of Christ's journey would have seemed to the writer as irrelevant and as irreverent as they do to us.

PART V

THE CLAIMS OF THE CHURCH

CHAPTER XXVI

TRADITIONAL VIEW OF THE CHURCH

The Church is viewed as a divine and visible society.

"It is a sweet and comely thing that a man should die for his native land": the patriotism which has appealed so strongly to the ancient and to the modern world should have something that corresponds to it in the sphere of religion.

1. A DEFINITION OF THE CHURCH

On the traditional view the Church is a divine and visible society marked by a visible bond of union. An essential element of this bond consists in the historic episcopate. It is a society authorized and empowered to teach Christ's truth and to administer His sacraments.

2. THE CHURCH IS A VISIBLE SOCIETY

In ordinary language the word *society* means a number of men bound together, not merely by the same principles, but by an outward organization or some other visible bond of union. In a family, for instance, we have the bond of a common descent. In an army we have men united under the same commander. Men may carry weapons and fight on the same side for a common cause; but, if they have no organization or other visible

bond of union, they form, not an army, but an armed mob.

3. THE CHURCH IS A DIVINE SOCIETY

The Church is divine because it is divinely authorized and empowered to teach Christ's truth and to administer His sacraments, because it has a divine foundation, and the promise of divine permanence.

In a more essential sense the Church is divine because it shares in the divine life of its Founder. It is united to Him ; it is, as it is called in the New Testament, the Body of Christ.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE VALUE OF THE CHURCH

Value of societies in general and of the Church in particular.

On the traditional theory loyalty to the Church is a part of our true welfare.

1. THE VALUE OF SOCIETIES IN GENERAL

Reformers, politicians, practical men in general, constantly form societies in the interests of their work; and there are good reasons why they should do so.

The formation of societies makes our work more efficient. If temperance reformers, for instance, had been content merely to lecture or preach about temperance, they would not have been anything like so successful. We all admit that to fight efficiently we must fight in an army, not merely as isolated individuals. "Union is strength." "United we stand; divided we fall."

Societies not only make our *work* better; they make *us* better. They help to make us unselfish; they promote public spirit and *esprit de corps*.

We count a man the better for being a patriot, for having strong family attachments, for being loyal to the various guilds or societies of which he is a member, for

having, in a word, a practical appreciation of the value of a corporate life. Membership in a great society provides us with an object of loyalty, an object over and above ourselves and our self-interest; it helps in a real sense towards our salvation, our salvation from ourselves, from our selfish individualism, our selfish slackness, our selfish vanity. We feel at once that it would be absurd to accuse devotion to our family or to our country of conflicting necessarily with our devotion to God, Who tells us to honour the king and those set in authority under him, and counts such devotion as devotion to Himself. We should be less, not more, devoted to God, if such devotion were lacking. This is why we sympathize with Shakespeare's praises of his own country, the "precious stone set in the silver sea," with the Roman Senate thanking the defeated general because he had "not despaired of the Republic," and with the verses of the Psalmist, "Our feet shall stand in thy gates, O Jerusalem": "if I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning." Human life would be infinitely poorer apart from loyalty to the societies to which we belong.

2. THE VALUE OF THE CHURCH IN PARTICULAR

The more a man can venerate the society of which he is a member the more the society will help him. Voluntary societies cannot claim the highest degree of veneration; man made them and man can unmake them, nor need he belong to them unless he likes. It was natural, therefore, that our Lord should not only intend His

followers to be formed into a society, but that He should Himself have founded the Church, a divine society, to be the object of absolute loyalty and of the intensest devotion.

If, then, we gain immensely by belonging to a great nation or even to some man-made voluntary association which we can leave at pleasure, how much more shall we gain if we realize that we are members of that divine and imperishable Kingdom founded by Christ Himself, the Home of grace and truth, the Church of the living God.

3. THE VALUE OF THE HISTORIC EPISCOPATE

On the traditional theory the ministers of the Church can only be ordained by those who have received power to do so, and this power is only given through those who already possess it. Those who possess it are the Bishops. The historic episcopate is the line of Bishops reaching back to the earliest times.

The value of the historic episcopate is involved in that of the Church viewed as a visible society. The Episcopate is a mark of that visibility—a mark of the Church being a society in the ordinary sense of the word. Apart from some visible bond of union the Church could only be held to consist of all believers; in that case it would not be a society in the ordinary sense, and would not be the object of loyalty that we need.

OBJECTION

If *some* visible bond is all that is necessary, a presbyterian succession would serve as well as an episcopal succession.

REPLY

If the Episcopate is essentially the order of the Ministry that has power to ordain, then, granting the presbyterian theory to be true, all presbyters are by definition bishops, and the succession can be called episcopal or presbyterian indifferently. There will be two orders in the Ministry instead of one. But in either case the principle of a ministerial succession of some sort is unchanged.

(With the historical evidence for the traditional view this book is not concerned.)

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE VALUE OF THE CHURCH AND THE SACRAMENTAL PRINCIPLE

Illustrated by reference to home, school, and national life. Spiritual realities are brought into contact with us through the societies in which they are embodied.

1. MEANING AND VALUE OF THE SACRAMENTAL PRINCIPLE

We mean by the sacramental principle this: that spiritual realities come into vital contact with us (i.e. are made known to us, influence us, and, in certain cases, unite us to themselves), not in their purely spiritual form, but through outward human means, in which they are expressed, embodied, and imparted.

Thus in ordinary life:

Men's thoughts and feelings come into contact with us through their words and looks.

Ceremonies and symbols serve to express, and so to intensify, our feelings, as when we salute the flag, drink the king's health, etc.

Outward good manners bring home to others and deepen in ourselves our goodwill and courtesy.

In the Christian religion the sacramental principle is carried to a higher level. God Himself gets into specially close, vital contact with us, and unites us to

Himself, by outward means specially adapted and appointed for this purpose.

In pre-Christian times God made Himself known to men and influenced men through a nation to which they belonged, through the events of its history, through its laws and its institutions, and (on the traditional view) through the miracles by which its history was distinguished.

Under the Christian dispensation God embodied and imparted Himself finally and fully in the Incarnation and in the Church (which is the " Body of Christ "—the " extension of the Incarnation ") with its outward Ministry and its outward Sacraments. By these means God does not merely give us knowledge *about* Himself, nor does He merely *influence* us from the outside ; He makes *Himself* known to us with a *personal knowledge*, and He imparts to us *His own life*.

2. THE CASE OF FAMILY LIFE

Family life is an illustration of this. We want a child to realize the spiritual realities—the duties, for instance, of obedience and affection. We do not begin by telling it to discard the family life until it has grasped and realized the truth and value of these realities by a course of ethical study. On the contrary, we make it live the family life, share in the family meals, do what it is told ; and in this way we expect that it will learn to realize the truth and value of the spiritual realities in question.

3. THE CASE OF SCHOOL LIFE

In a good school a boy is in vital contact with the reality—the spiritual reality—which we call " the school life," the school " tone," or the school " discipline," and with what lies behind all these—namely, the spirit of law, order, authority.

These spiritual realities are embodied in the school, the school staff, the school discipline. Just because they are so embodied, the boy comes to have experience of their reality. He does not reflect on his experiences; he certainly does not talk about them; he could not express them in words if he tried. But they are there none the less. It would be absurd for any one to say that the school was a minor detail in the process of the boy's education; that the " spirit is everything," and that the school is the " husk which can be discarded at pleasure." The spirit comes to the boy, not naked, but clothed in an outward life, which makes it possible for him to realize it and to estimate it at its true value.

You do not begin by proving to him the duty of obedience and loyalty. He learns these duties by living the school life, and by doing so his mind becomes pervaded by their spirit. He breathes the atmosphere until it becomes a part of himself, unconsciously, no doubt, but none the less really.

If the boy is homesick or in the blues, his real experience (though he does not call it by any such fine name) of the value of discipline and affection and so on may become for a time faint. The whole thing may seem to him weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable. Yet as long as

he goes about his work and his play, he is being moulded all the time by the spiritual realities that seem at the time so far away and unreal.

4. NATIONAL LIFE IN GENERAL

We gain self-respect by being members of a civilized State with a civilized Government. But what would "the Government" mean to us if we were not reminded of its existence by seeing the policeman holding up the traffic at the street corner and the postman going his rounds and the thousand and one other ways in which "the Government" brings before our eyes the fact of its existence?

No amount of fine talking about Imperialism or Kingship or any such abstract ideas will bring the fact of Government home to us in the same way as living the life of a good citizen.

To the patriot, as some one says, "his country is a living, historic, pre-existent home, of inexhaustible grandeur and wealth, a majestic and lovable fabric made up of manifold traditions, customs, laws, and habits, of religion, literature, and language, of a network of responsibilities, fidelities, duties, affections, and virtues, all built into a vital supernatural framework." And this "framework" (this organism or living body, as we may prefer to call it) is "at once divine and intensely human"; the organism and the spirit which animates it "constitute together the family cohesion of an ancient nation."

The passage brings out well the way in which

the inner and the outer life of the nation coexist together.

5. THE CASE OF THE CHURCH

What is true of the family, the school, and of other societies is true *a fortiori* of the Church.

In living the life of the Church we are in real contact with, and have real experience of, the greatest of all spiritual realities, God Himself.

Objection

Men say of the Church what they say of the sacraments, that we are meant to have direct access to God, and that there is no need of outward or human means to make that access possible.

Reply

To summarize what has been said before:

It is a false spirituality that leads men to disparage the use in religion of what is outward, visible, and human. True spirituality does not aim at annihilating the human element in religion. It makes the human element spiritual by consecrating it to God's service. We are incapable of holding ourselves up in the rarefied atmosphere of the spiritual world by our own spiritual efforts. The spiritual world must take hold of us, and must do so in visible, human ways.

CHAPTER XXIX

BREADTH OF MIND, AND THE INTERDEPENDENCE OF THE CHRISTIAN CLAIMS

The claims of the Church are not merely additional to the claims of Christ.

Some people think it a mark of breadth of mind to be uninterested in the question of Churchmanship. "A tower," they say, "is not made weaker because the builders have left out the top story. The Christian life only misses a small percentage of its full value if one out of all the Christian claims is ignored." The Lambeth "Quadrilateral" gives us four essentials; among these is included the Historic Episcopate. Protestantism falls short with regard to one point only or with regard to two at the most. (The percentage has increased, we notice, on this view, but the conclusion of the argument is the same:) "It is narrow-minded of us to pay too much regard to the claims of the Church. The path to reunion should be easy."

In reply to such objections we draw attention to the interdependence of the Christian claims.

The Christian claims do not exist in mutual isolation.

(*a*) To say that we fall short in one of these essentials without in any way falling short in the rest, involves the assumption that Catholic faith and practice is a whole

of a somewhat mechanical kind, which can be divided into four separate water-tight departments with no vital connexion between them. The Christian life is an organism, the parts of which are mutually dependent, and we expect weakness in one organ to affect the whole body.

We repudiate the arithmetical or departmental view of the Christian life, which would liken its essentials to a sum in addition ($1 + 1 + 1 + 1$ makes 4). The essential elements of that life are not separate units, one of which can be taken away while we leave the rest the same.

We certainly do make this plain when we are dealing with the non-Christian religions. We do not, for instance, say that Mohammedanism is the same as Christianity in regard to its belief in God, and only falls short in other essentials, e.g. in belief in the Incarnation. On the contrary, we expect and we find that failure to believe in the Incarnation has affected belief in God. The Mohammedan view of God's character and of His personal relationship with men is widely different from the Christian view.

This consideration is a commonplace, but unfortunately we do not always keep our commonplaces in mind. Charity perhaps prevents us from doing so in dealing with the differences between Christian denominations. And yet true charity leads us neither to minimize differences nor to magnify them, but to see them exactly as they are.

(*b*) What we have said in general has an application to the special case in hand.

Failure in one essential involves the danger, to say the least, of failure in the rest.

The Incarnation, we say, is the great example or rather the foundation of the Sacramental principle; the Sacraments and the Church are the extension of the Incarnation. The doctrine of the Historic Episcopate goes with the doctrine of the Church and the Sacraments and is logically connected with the Incarnation, since they are all examples of the same principle.

We are fond of saying that logic is not life, and that men are not led by logic. Yet, in the long run, outraged logic, like outraged nature, has a way of taking its revenge. Logical implications of a position work themselves out in practice, as we see in the case of the German Protestants. The danger is there, and the danger is none the less real for being unseen.

We see now how radically misleading is the illustration of the tower. In the building of the tower the higher you get the further you are removed from the firmness of the foundations. But, if we must have a building illustration, the Church and the Sacraments are to be compared to the keystone of the arch which holds the arch together. They are the ways in which the fundamental realities of duty, of God, and of Christ are brought home to us welded together in a concrete organic whole.

PART VI

THE CLAIMS OF THE SACRAMENTS

CHAPTER XXX

THE MEANING OF THE SACRAMENTS

Sacraments viewed as ceremonies only, and sacraments viewed as means of grace. The validity of this distinction.

1. SACRAMENTS AS MEANS OF GRACE

On the traditional view sacraments are ceremonies, outward observances, but at the same time infinitely more than ceremonies. Thus in Holy Communion the eating of the bread is not merely a symbol of our dependence on Christ's life, but the actual means by which that life is imparted to us. It is not merely a symbol of grace, but a means of grace. Sacraments are symbols, but they convey the grace they symbolize. We may use the gift of grace badly, but the gift is given none the less.

2. THE SACRAMENTS VIEWED AS CEREMONIES ONLY

The ceremonial view of the sacraments makes the traditional view clearer by contrast; sacraments, it says, are ceremonies—divinely appointed ceremonies, but still ceremonies and nothing more.

The main thing is that we should have "a lively faith in Christ"; we must stir up our minds to think of Him, our hearts to love Him, our wills to obey Him. Our efforts will be stimulated by private study of the Bible and by attendance at public worship. The sacraments,

the Lord's Supper in particular, are means to the same end. They are ceremonies appointed by Christ Himself which appeal to our hearts and minds and wills and imaginations through the eye just as music appeals to them through the ear.

We have here what we may call (paradoxically, perhaps, but with strict accuracy) the ritualistic or dramatic view of the Eucharist. It is a sort of drama, a solemn Passion Play. It is performed before us as a memorial of certain past events and present facts. It reminds us of Christ's Death (although on this view the exhibition of a picture or of a crucifix might, so one would think, have served the purpose better). The eating of the bread and the drinking of the wine is a symbol that reminds us of the fact that just as our bodies are strengthened by the bread and wine so our souls are strengthened by Christ's gift of grace.

OBJECTION

Sacraments cannot be distinguished from ceremonies by being called "means of grace."

Ceremonies help us in our spiritual life. Thus the eating of the bread in Holy Communion impresses on us the fact that we depend on Christ just as our bodies depend on food. Now Christ works in our faculties, in the ceremony of Holy Communion, helping to create this impression. This is only another way of saying that Christ gives us His grace through the sacraments.

REPLY

The grace given by the sacraments on the traditional theory is out of all proportion to what we may call the " natural " benefit conferred through ceremonies. There is a vast difference between Christ HELPING US TO FEEL A SENSE OF DEPENDENCE ON HIS LIFE, and Christ actually GIVING US THAT LIFE. A gift of this kind is so great that it seems appropriate to call sacraments, in distinction from ceremonies, " means of grace."

CHAPTER XXXI

THE VALUE OF SACRAMENTS REGARDED AS CEREMONIES ONLY

1. THE UNIVERSALITY OF THEIR USE BEARS WITNESS TO THEIR VALUE

It is not only primitive, uncivilized people who have made great use of ceremonies; they permeate modern life. We find them engrained in our daily routine. Taking off our hats, bowing, and shaking hands are all ceremonial acts of a simple kind. We find them in public functions, and in a highly developed form in great societies, such as the Masons or the Good Templars.

2. CEREMONIES ARE AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTAL PRINCIPLE

As we have said, spiritual realities come into vital contact with us through outward means, and among such outward means ceremonies have an important place.

3. CEREMONIES AS AN APPEAL TO THE WILL

Ceremonies express the fact that devotion to God is a matter of the will as much as of the feelings:

The Lord, He is a man of might.
In deeds, in deeds He takes delight.

There is truth in these lines of Stevenson's. To come to office punctually is better than to have an acute appreciation of the abstract beauty of punctuality.

Now our worship is of a piece with our lives, and therefore in our worship also we give high rank to acts and deeds. It is a fine thing, no doubt, to be able to cultivate noble thoughts (let us say) of kingship; but such thoughts are a private affair of our own; to dwell on them leads to pride in our powers of imagination, in our "sensitiveness to the charm of exquisite emotions." We honour the King more when we join with a company of ordinary men in drinking the King's health at a dinner, a ceremony which, as Rudyard Kipling says somewhere, never fails in a foreign land to make an impression on those who take part in it. Even if it makes no impression at the time, the fact remains that we have committed ourselves to an action. Men in Cornwall after a revivalist mission were found sitting in chapel in sullen apathetic silence. Asked why they were not joining in the service, one of them said: "I suppose if I be to pray the mind will take me." This was obviously to put inclinations before actions. Liking to pray is right and desirable, but it is wrong and undesirable to pray simply because we like and when we like. Our likings are good servants, but bad masters.

Taking our part in the sacraments, even if they are only regarded as ceremonies—taking part in them whatever our moods or feelings may happen to be at the moment—emphasizes the fact that our religion must be an affair of the will. Such ceremonies are a standing

witness against the dangers of a "subjective" religion in which the importance of the feelings is exaggerated.

Even if the sacraments are no more than ceremonies their value is not superseded by prayer and good works.

It is, furthermore, fitting that ceremonies, since they have this value, this natural value, should be divinely appointed for our use in the Christian religion.

CHAPTER XXXII

THE VALUE OF SACRAMENTS AS MEANS OF GRACE

Connexion with the sacramental principle. Need of acts of God, and dangers of subjectivism.

SACRAMENTS, on the traditional view, are not merely means, but the supreme means, of grace.

1. OBJECTION

The traditional view exaggerates the value of sacraments. We can worship God better among the beauties of nature, by the sea or on the mountains, than we can among our imperfect human fellow-men in churches made by men's hands. As some one says in a book on music: "Beethoven . . . gave his composition a scope which placed it beyond the apparatus of the church, and filled it with a spirit that spurns the limitation of any creed of less breadth and universality than the grand Theism which affectionate communion with nature had taught him."

The family meal is a greater thing than the formality of a communion service. Sacraments in the traditional sense of the word, viewed as means of grace, are unnecessary. At any rate they play only a subsidiary part in our religion.

REPLY

(*a*) *Witness of Christian conviction.*

We cannot doubt that the conviction of their value has been deeply and widely felt in all ages. Men have felt that in the Eucharist particularly we find the meeting-place between God and man. They have felt that the best chance of escaping from their ordinary and often sordid surroundings, and (which is still harder) of escaping from themselves, lies, not in places of amusement or even in family intercourse, but in the Eucharist. They have felt that it is the Eucharist itself that matters, whether it is celebrated in a lordly cathedral

Or where the kneeling hamlet drains
The chalice of the grapes of God.

If the crown made the king, the king would not be worth crowning. If the greatness of the Eucharist depended on outward splendour it would not be worthy of such splendour. It is because the Eucharist is so great in itself that men have lavished on its accompaniments the best gifts that art and music can provide. Those who use the Sacraments faithfully would feel the lack of them even though they could not explain their value in words. To be deprived of them would be to lose what above everything else makes religion a vital reality.

(*b*) *Sacraments and the Sacramental principle.*

Christian conviction as to the value of the Sacraments is based on good grounds. We have seen that God comes into contact with us through outward facts.

Among such outward facts are the Incarnation and the Church. We have seen also that God comes into contact with us, not only through facts, but through *acts*. Stevenson's lines come in again :

In deeds, in deeds He takes delight.

God takes delight, not only in man's acts and deeds, but in His own. Among such acts of God are included the Resurrection and the Sacraments.

If Christ's life were to work in us only in an internal habitual way, we should forget that His work *is* His work ; we should forget that He is the Giver of His own gifts ; and, finally, we might cease to think about His gifts at all—we might fail to distinguish them from our own efforts. If, in other words, Christ's influence were merely a *diffused* influence, acting at all times in the same degree, we should think of it and of Him no more than we do of the air we breathe so regularly and continuously.

Or if Christ's influence only varied in accordance with our earnestness and efforts to think of Him, we should fail to realize that He acts, as personal beings do, on His own initiative ; we should feel that His response to our efforts was something of an impersonal kind ; it would be like the " response " made by our water-supply, which (normally speaking at any rate) is always at hand, and which varies only according to how far we choose to turn the tap, and how long we choose to keep it turned.

To recur to our old illustration ; the king comes into personal contact with us by breaking through his

official routine—that is, by personal acts and deeds. So it is with God. There are many ways in which we may infer His personal reality, but we realize that reality best when He embodies Himself in outward forms and expresses Himself in personal actions.

Loyalty to Christ carries with it the loyal use of Christ's Sacraments, and the claims of such loyalty are intensely urgent.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE EUCHARISTIC PRESENCE AND THE EUCHARISTIC SACRIFICE

The Eucharist is an epitome of the Christian life, the Act of acts in which the Christian life—a life of union with God—exists in its most intense and concentrated form.

1. THE EUCHARIST AS A SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

What we have said about the Sacraments in general applies *a fortiori* to the Eucharist, in which, according to the traditional view, Christ gives to us His Body and His Blood—that is, Himself or His own Life—under the forms of bread and wine.

2. THE EUCHARISTIC PRESENCE AND ITS VALUE

The Christian life is a life of devotion, and one of the aspects of devotion is worship, of which God is the proper and perfect object.

In the Eucharist Christ is present in a way which not only admits of, but demands, and makes possible, worship in its most real and concentrated form.

Objection

God is omnipresent, and Christ as God, on the traditional theory, is omnipresent also. His presence cannot

be more real at one time or one place than another. He is always at hand for us to worship Him; it is never unfitting, still less impossible, for us to say in words or in our mind, "My Lord and my God." A special Eucharistic Presence connected with outward material objects is not needed. Furthermore, there is always an immanent presence of Christ in the communicant. A presence outside himself is not desirable, and ought not be desired. The Eucharistic Presence, according to Catholic theology, is not a local presence. Christ does not move when the bread and wine move. Also Eucharistic worship is addressed, not primarily to Christ, but to the Father. The Eucharist is an act in which the Prince of Peace takes us up with and in Himself that we may share with Him in His own worship of the King.

REPLY

The fact remains that the worship of Christ has a place in traditional Christianity. As in other ways, so in our worship we come to the Father through the Son.

The Eucharist is our central act of Christian worship, and in it Christ is an object, if not the primary object, of worship.

Again, God is omnipresent; yet men have always felt that He manifests Himself, and so becomes more real to us, at definite times and in definite places. They have felt it to be fitting that He should have His sacred buildings in which we behave with special reverence. There may seem to be something of a contradiction

here, but it is a contradiction which has always been faced, and both aspects of the matter must have justice done to them.

The two truths are put side by side in the Old Testament: "Behold, the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded."

Yet the writer feels that there is no real contradiction in saying in the same breath that God has commanded a House to be built in which He may place His Name and manifest His glory.

It is simply the climax of the same principle that God should give us His very self for our adoration in the Real Presence in the Holy Eucharist.

We have illustrations of this in the New Testament. Christ was present everywhere working with and in His disciples after the Resurrection, but that did not militate against the special worship paid Him by the disciples when they saw Him in His Resurrection appearances. This special presence not only *admits* of worship; it *demands* worship. Such worship was not repudiated by Christ. St. Mary is forbidden to cling to His visible Form; St. John is forbidden in his vision to worship the angel; but neither of them are checked from the worship of Christ Himself. We can value the sacramental Presence of Christ without thinking less of other methods of His Presence; and we can worhsip Him without refusing to worship the Father through Him.

3. THE EUCHARISTIC SACRIFICE AND ITS VALUE

We have considered the nature of this sacrifice already in the chapter on Christ as the Means of Pardon. Christ is presenting on earth the sacrifice of the Cross, as He presents it continually in Heaven. And we, as communicants, are united to Christ, and share in His Sacrifice.

CHAPTER XXXIV

THE EUCHARIST AS THE CHIEF SERVICE OF THE CHURCH

THERE is no reason for saying that the Eucharist is not easily understood, and cannot be appreciated, by quite simple people. The contrary is the case. The eternal attitude of loving response, made by the Son to the Father, is a plain conception. That filial love was manifested in Christ's life and death on earth. It pleads for us in Heaven where Christ stands before the throne, the Lamb as it had been slain; the truth of this can be felt by the simplest minds. In the Eucharist Christ is present, and the great response of love that wells up from the Son to the Father is going on by a Divine Act before our eyes. We are feeble people; our prayers and aspirations and resolutions are feeble too. We know this too well. But in the Eucharist we and they together are caught in the uprush of this Divine Act, and hand in hand with Himself He presents us before the Father's throne: "Behold, I and the children whom Thou hast given Me." Can any conception be more simple or more inspiring?

No other service can fit in the same way our deepest needs. At Matins or Evensong too often the attitude of the generality of the congregation is passive only. They

come that they may be moved by the singing and by the sermon. They expect their attention to be caught for them by these extraneous influences. The cultivation of religious moods has become the paramount function of public worship. The manward aspect of the service is the main aspect. If they do not feel in the mood to be moved they may as well, so they think, stop away. There is nothing in the service which is definitely more than, greater than, their moods, their feelings, their emotions.

Ignorance of the Eucharist has allowed the sermon and the singing to usurp the place of prayer, praise, and worship. There is a marked downward tendency. The service of the Church, instead of being regarded as our highest privilege, as the chance of access into the Holy of Holies, becomes first a mere matter of duty or principle, and is then degraded into being a spiritual (or unspiritual) luxury.

Take Matins at its best. There are thousands of good and devout people who seem to be untouched by the prevalent indifferentism, who come to Church to take an active part in the worship of God. But even so, the manward aspect of the services is too often the dominant aspect. They go away and say that they were touched and thrilled and moved, and that they heard something in the sermon that will give them something to think about all the week. They think, and they think rightly, about the good that they got. They think of the way in which their thoughts were inspired, and their wills and emotions stimulated.

But how different it is with the Eucharist. The good that it did us takes a secondary place in our thoughts. The service may not have been well rendered. Our minds may have wandered. We may not have felt at our best. But all these are minor points. We do not feel it fitting to think or speak about ourselves and our feelings or lack of feeling. God was there. That thought absorbs all other thoughts. There is no room to think about ourselves. The glory of the Lord filled the Temple. God was making response to God, the Son to the Father. Deep was making answer to deep. And all they that see it shall say, What hath God done? Behold, it was His work.

We may rightly resent on behalf of the child the imputation that it is not capable of a share in the Divine Act which goes on in the Eucharist.

What the child lacks in power of concentration it makes up by its power of intensity. And how little, after all, our efforts have to do with the matter. It is an immodest notion that lies at the root of the charge. It is the notion that the child is not fitted in itself, but that we are fitted, to take part in the worship of God. But in ourselves we are all unfitted to stand anywhere near His Presence. However great are our powers of concentration we can none of us rely on these powers to earn for us a place in God's courts. And the act of God into which we are caught up, and which makes up for our deficiencies, can bear along the child as well as us. From all people alike, learned and simple, old and young, God demands as

much concentration as we can give Him—no more and no less.

CONCLUSION

The Eucharist is the centre of Christian worship—the act in which God comes to meet us. This is why even men who are unfamiliar with it speak half in envy and half in admiration of the traditional service of the Church and of the atmosphere of reverence which they find nowhere else in the same degree or of the same kind —of some great service in some great Cathedral thronged with silent worshippers :

All famishing in expectation
Of the main altar's consummation.

Theocrite was right, though Browning meant to point perhaps a different moral :

Morning, eve, noon, and night,
" Praise God," sang Theocrite.

Said Blaise, the listening monk, " Well done ;
I doubt not thou art heard, my son.

" This Easter Day the Pope at Rome
Praises God from Peter's Dome."

Said Theocrite, " Would God that I
Might praise God that great way, and die."

Theocrite was right thus far : it is no light honour for a priest to present before God " the only offering precious in His sight " for the sake of the world, himself, and the people committed to his charge.

PART VII

THE CLAIMS OF RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

CHAPTER XXXV

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES: INTRODUCTORY

Devotion and trust express themselves in religious practices—in practices, that is, having explicit and conscious reference to God. Such practices are an essential part of our true welfare.

MEANING OF TERM

By "Religious Practices" we mean practices in which we are concerned consciously and primarily with God, with His relationship to us, and ours to Him.

(This description is not a definition, but it is correct as far as it goes, and is sufficient for the purpose in hand.)

Thus we distinguish religious practices from other actions, e.g. from helping our friends, in which we may be, and certainly ought to be, acting for God's glory, with God as our ultimate object, but in which we are not concerned with God so directly.

CHAPTER XXXVI

PETITION

Objections that petition is arbitrary and unfair.

PRAYER in the sense of Petition is an expression of active faith or trust in God, and is a necessary element in our true welfare—in the Christian life.

From the Christian point of view our conviction of the value and necessity of petition rests, not only on authority, but on an insight into the heart of things—into the laws of the spiritual universe.

1. TWO CHARACTERISTICS OF PETITION

(*a*) *Growth.*

Our petitions should grow with our experience of the needs of others and of ourselves.

All Pudding Lane was singing the praises of Mrs. Jones who had died in hospital the week before. "She was a good woman," said her friend, "and a great one for her religion. For forty years, drunk or sober, she never went to bed without saying:

> '*Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John,*
> *Bless the bed that I lie on.*'"

Many people have never got beyond the prayers they used when they were six years old, nor beyond the

elementary ideas of prayer current in the street and in the club.

(*b*) *Prayer is work.*

The unskilled labourer may think that labour means manual labour and that no other form of labour is worthy of the name. The man in the office knows better. Head work is as much work as manual work; if the manual labourer thinks otherwise, then the manual labourer is very much mistaken. But the man in the office is guilty of the same narrowness when he can't bring himself to believe that going to Church is work, not pleasure; business, not recreation. He forgets that concentration of attention marks true prayer, and such concentration is far from easy. To pray is to labour, and if prayer is not labour, it is not prayer.

It is not surprising, if petition does not grow with the growth of our knowledge, and if we have never made it a part of our work in life, that we give up and undervalue its use, and that, when we do use it, we use it in an unsystematic and unreal way.

2. THE VALUE OF PETITION

Objection

Petition in the traditional sense of the word should give way to "higher forms" of prayer. Prayer should consist in the cultivation of right wishes; not in bending God's will to ours, but in bending our will to God's. It should consist in the cultivation of resignation to God's will when His will is not in accordance with our wishes. Direct petitions are no part of true religion.

It would be intolerable for us to keep on asking our earthly father to look after our welfare; and it is intolerable to urge our heavenly Father to do so, as though He did not know our needs, or as though He were reluctant to supply them.

REPLY

(*a*) There is a widespread conviction as to the value of petition, which has existed in all ages and among all classes of people, including the most intelligent and the most devout. This is good evidence, if not for the efficacy of petition, at least for its moral character. It is not likely that so many wise and good men should be mistaken as to whether petition is in harmony with the highest moral standards.

(*b*) The dependence of God's gifts on our petitions does not imply ignorance or reluctance on His part to grant them.

If a child wants a second help of meat, it does not hold out its plate in silence. It says: "Please." It is not giving information by the use of that little word, neither is it wheedling what it wants out of a reluctant father. It is being polite. It is recognizing that its father is its father, not an automatic machine which works when you press a spring.

So, when I pray, I am recognizing God, a personal Being, as my heavenly Father. It is right and reasonable that God who knows my needs should make His gifts dependent on my asking for them, otherwise I might forget from Whom they come, and that

they are free gifts, and not a matter of wages or of reward.

(*c*) Petition is a mark of free intercourse between God and man.

Intercourse with God is an essential element in our true welfare. Such intercourse should be free and unreserved.

In intercourse with my friend, I may form a wish and express my wish in words; if I stop at this point and refuse to go so far as to turn my expression of a wish into a request, I have held myself in reserve; I have kept something back; I have not been entirely and completely open, even though he knows, and I know that he knows, that I want him to fulfil my wish. My attitude argues a lack of confidence between him and myself. I have been afraid of being misjudged, or of seeming to use his friendship for selfish ends; or I have been too proud to lay myself open to a refusal. Obviously, no such lack of confidence is fitting to my relationship with God.

Petition, direct request, is an essential element in the most intimate familiar filial intercourse.

Objection

Petition on behalf of others, i.e. Intercession, is unfair. Such prayers mean that to some extent your friend's welfare depends on your prayers. But this would be unfair. It would be grossly unfair that he should suffer because you neglect your prayers; your neglect is something for which he is not responsible.

REPLY

The objection proves too much. The objector says: "It is unfair that my children should suffer because I neglect to pray for them." Well, then, if he is consistent, he must go further; he must say: "It is unfair that my children should suffer because I neglect to *influence* them as I ought, e.g. to look after their health and their recreation and their education. It follows that trying to influence people in any way is as useless as praying for them. God is not unfair, and therefore other people will not be allowed to suffer for my fault."

If such an objection were made we should be quite sure that it was a sophism even if we were not able to answer it. We should be sure that our influence does make a difference, and we should go on using our influence as before. A world in which we were all unable to help each other would be a poor world; it might be a "fairer" world, but it would not be a world we should like to live in.

If the objection breaks down as regards influence, it breaks down as regards prayer. We are sure that it is not unfair that our prayers should make a difference to other people, and we are sure they do make a difference.

The objector may still urge that, whether we pray or not, it will all be the same in the end, even if it makes a difference in the present. God will make up to people in some future state for the absence of our prayers since the fault has not been their own. It would be unfair if God did not do this. We reply, as before, that the objection proves too much. It applies to the use of our

influence as much as to the use of prayer. In some future life God may make up to the orphan or to the child in a criminal slum for the disadvantages of their upbringing, but this does not in the least prevent us from supporting orphanages or reformatories to influence the child for good here and now.

In short, if it is right and reasonable to use our influence over other people, the objections against intercession fall to the ground.

CHAPTER XXXVII

REPENTANCE AND CONFESSION

If repentance is not an essential element in our true welfare, the Parable of the Prodigal, it seems, must be rewritten. The Prodigal should have come straight back to his home, ordered his dinner, taken his old place at the table, and gone about his old round of work on the farm, without any word of apology.

But the fact that our instincts rebel against such a revision of the story makes us suspect that the diagnosis of the modern mind is at fault.

Common honesty demands repentance; contrition and confession mean simply that we are facing the facts. To refuse to do so is to harbour a lie, the worst of all lies, what Plato calls the "lie in the soul," the lie of self-deception.

We must make a beginning by telling our sins to God and asking Him to make us sorry. We never get to grips with ourselves until we have put our attitude into words. To do this it helps us enormously to take another person into our confidence. There is an instinct which leads us to be open with a friend. Give this instinct play. The contrary instinct which leads us to reserve we may like to call "proper pride"; but it is generally cowardice, fear of facing others, and fear of facing ourselves.

To tell others is to tell God. A child is not speaking to God the less because it says its prayers at its mother's knee. Our friend is not a barrier between us and God, but a bridge.

The Church has provided in the ordinance of confession a means by which this instinct for openness can be safeguarded and consecrated. But whatever we think of this, the fact remains that repentance is incomplete without entire openness with God; and that means self-examination, sorrow, and the telling of our sins (not merely our sinfulness) in detail as far as we can find them out.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

REPENTANCE AND RENUNCIATION

Renunciation is a further aspect of repentance. We cannot repent as we should unless we resolve to give up the sins that we confess.

In thinking of the higher levels of goodness we must not neglect the elementary duties which lead up to and accompany them.

One of these elementary duties is Renunciation.

1. WHY WE RESENT THE DUTY OF RENUNCIATION

We do not like to think that we must begin with the elementary resolve to renounce what is wrong. Our fancy may be caught by fine ideals, the ideal of being men of prayer like Gordon, or philanthropists like Barnardo.

We are flattered by our own idealism. We feel ourselves more noble when we gaze up at the mountains above us and appreciate their beauty. It is not a blow to our vanity to think that we are living on the plain. Other people are living there too; and, "after all," we say, "no one is perfect; some time—not to-day, but to-morrow perhaps—we too will climb the mountains."

But it is a blow, and a serious blow, to our vanity to remember that we are living in the pit below the level

of the plain ; that we have to get out of the common pit of deliberate sin before we even begin to climb.

2. NECESSITY OF RENUNCIATION

Therefore our innate vanity, our conceit, makes us resent the elementary duty of renunciation. We forget that we have neither part nor lot with those fine ideals and with those who strive after them, until we renounce the sins which we commit deliberately and habitually—our impurity, our covetousness, our refusal to pray, our refusal to forgive—those common sins which we share with the common crowd whom we despise as having, unlike our noble selves, no ideals at all—the crowd which never looks up, as we do, to the mountain peaks.

3. RENUNCIATION OF SELF-WILL

There are plenty of clean-living people who do their duty at home and engage in good works outside, but hold themselves free to do what they call " their own work " in their own way. They resent advice, and are bitterly offended if any one who can do their work better than they can is put in their place.

Mad with unconscious conceit they are engaged in the self-contradictory pursuit of trying to serve God on their own terms, as if they could make up by their zeal in one department for their deliberate disobedience in another.

They, too, have to make a great act of renunciation ; they have to renounce, not the vice of self-indulgence or of indolence, but the individualism which makes them try to be superior to the Christian society of which they form a part, and to the discipline in which its spirit finds expression.

CHAPTER XXXIX

MEDITATION AND THE USE OF THE BIBLE

1. THE MEANING OF MEDITATION

In the ordinary sense of the word, to meditate about a thing is to think about it with some amount of seriousness, to turn it over in our minds, and to dwell on it and on its different aspects.

In this chapter we use the word in the slightly fuller sense current in devotional books. Without aiming at a complete definition we may notice the following points:

(*a*) *Meditation in general, or informal meditation.*

We meditate about a thing when not only our thoughts, but our feelings and wills also, are brought to bear upon it. Meditation is an attitude of the whole inner self. It is therefore contrasted with outward action, although of course it leads up to, and is closely connected with, outward action. It is also contrasted with thinking that aims primarily at getting new knowledge. Meditating is thinking about something that we do know already with the aim of bringing it home to ourselves, of realizing it better. These aims are distinct, though in practice they cannot be sharply separated.

Furthermore, meditation that is concerned directly or

indirectly with God includes prayer in its widest sense of speaking to God, as well as of asking His help, in order that we may think, feel, and will as we ought.

(*b*) *Formal meditation.*

Formal meditation is marked by a greater degree of deliberate effort, and by the setting apart of definite times to be used for this express purpose.

2. MEDITATION IS A NORMAL PART OF OUR ORDINARY LIFE

Thus the busiest practical man thinks from time to time of the aims—good, bad, or indifferent—for which he is working, of his family, or of his career, or of the pleasure of "doing down" his business rivals.

Again, the business man may set aside some definite part of his time to think over the aims for which he is working. He may, for instance, read, and perhaps reread, letters received from his children whose interests he has at heart, or articles in a newspaper bearing on the welfare of his country. In doing this he is making some approach to a formal meditation.

3. THE SUBJECT-MATTER OF MEDITATION

Stated in the most general way, the subject-matter of our meditations must naturally consist in everything that goes to make up a satisfactory life. Following the lines of a previous chapter we must meditate on :

(*a*) The claims made on our devotion—on the claims of duty, of our fellow-soldiers in life's warfare, of our friends, of our country, of the men who need our help,

and, in particular, on the claims of God, in which all other claims are included.

(*b*) The different aspects of devotion by which we respond to these claims—on the duties of resolution, reverence, love, gratitude, patriotism, kindness, and, in particular, on Christ, Who gives us an example of all such aspects of devotion.

4. THE VALUE OR NECESSITY OF INFORMAL MEDITATION

Objection

The practical man (so called) may say, "Our work gives us no time for meditation. Meditation is also unnecessary. At any rate, if we think about the immediate objects of our work, of our friends, our family, that is enough. There is no need for us to meditate about God. We believe He exists; with that belief we may be content."

Reply

(*a*) We have just seen that meditation is *a normal part of ordinary life.* Everybody meditates, and the only question is whether we meditate about the right things, and whether we meditate as much and as systematically as we ought.

(*b*) *The inner life is the root of outward action.* The precept, "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for therein are the issues of life," is endorsed by ordinary experience. Obviously, if we never think of things lovely, things honourable, things of good report, we are not

likely to prefer such things to what is unlovely, dishonourable, and of bad report. We are not likely to be patriots unless we dream sometimes of the greatness of our country, or philanthropists unless we are touched with a feeling of compassion for the poor.

Imagine a man so absorbed in his work that he cannot take the object of his work into account—a manufacturer, for instance, so busy in turning out his wares that he has no time to think of selling them, when selling them is the very object for which they are made. We should regard such a man with pity or contempt, and all the more if he prided himself on being "practical." And the absurdity or pathos reaches its limit when we remember that the end and judge and support of our work is God.

The practical man, we are agreed, must have somebody to work for; his work is selfish if he works for himself alone. He must not only have an object in life, but that object must be a personal object. And he must keep this object in mind; he must think habitually of the person or persons for whom he works. Such habitual thinking makes the man a better man, and makes his work better too.

And so the practical man is to blame if he gives himself no time for intercourse with his family. We know the consequences of such neglect. Out of sight means out of mind. He ceases to think of those to whom he rarely speaks. He makes power or possessions or popularity his god; and then, depressed perhaps by failure, or gorged by success, he finds himself bowing

down in an empty shrine, working because he has nothing else to do, and with nothing to work for.

He has made work his idol, and the idol has been broken to pieces.

In any case he is losing that intercourse which is meant to be one of the main inspirations and influences of his life. Now, as we have seen, family love is a channel of the love of God; it is based on God and is meant to lead to God. It is not meant to be an end in itself:

A father's care, a mother's love,
True image are of God above;
And lead us on where they and we
With Him in endless love may be.

And so, when we think of it, it is ludicrous or pathetic or both to pride ourselves on being "practical" men as long as we disparage worship and meditation. God, so we believe, exists. If He exists, He must be taken into account; His approval must come first; He is the ultimate object of our actions. And the effort to take God into account is intercourse with God (for God meets our efforts half-way), and intercourse involves meditation.

The archangel in the Temple at Jerusalem, where the old priest offers the daily sacrifice, says: "I am Gabriel who stand in the presence of God." The words can be taken literally. He stands there and then before God, and knows that He does so, even while He does God's work on earth. *Asto ante Deum*, "I stand in the presence of God," is no unfit motto to carry us through

life. It is a recognition of the greatest of all facts, the fact of God.

We have another illustration of this informal ejaculatory worship in the case of the boy in Browning's story :

Morning, eve, noon, and night
" Praise God," sang Theocrite.

. . . . .

Then to his poor trade he turned
Whereby the daily meal was earned.

. . . . .

And ever at each period
He stopped, and sang " Praise God."

The classical account of this habitual recollection is in " The Reflections of Brother Lawrence," the ex-soldier and cook in a monastery. He tells us how, when he began his monastic life, to keep God's presence in mind for a minute together was a great strain and effort ; but that afterwards it was as unnatural to him to let that sense of the Presence go for a minute as it had been at first to keep it, while all the time his work (so the others told him) seemed to be helped and not hindered.

(*c*) This habitual informal meditation may be largely of a subconscious kind, and in this way it may go along with our ordinary work. Without doing harm to the work, we can think of two things at once. Thus the soldier on the parade ground may be thinking very hard about the complicated manœuvres in which he is

engaged, but he does his work better and not worse if at the back of his mind he feels that his commander-in-chief or some representative of royalty is looking on. Men run better in a race than they do in practice; the knowledge that it is a race is an inspiration, not a hindrance.

And we may say the same of the thought of God.

So Christ in the great Trial, on the Cross, and throughout His life is assured of, and is supported by, the knowledge of the presence of God. His followers will be scattered, and leave Him alone, and yet He is not alone really, for the Father is with Him. It is good for Him to hold fast by God and to have God always before Him.

5. VALUE AND NECESSITY OF FORMAL DELIBERATE MEDITATION

Objection

Formal meditation is too cold-blooded a process to be useful. We cannot call up our feelings to order, and when we are not in the mood to feel as we ought, to meditate is worse than useless.

Reply

(*a*) Ordinary experience bears out the value and importance of formal meditation. The business man is not content to think of his family from time to time when he is by himself. He makes opportunities, he makes time, for family intercourse. Apart from such times of intercourse his work is in danger of becoming

too absorbing. Neglect of set times of intercourse with his family, neglect of informal occasional thoughts of his family, react on each other.

And what applies to the business man and his family applies also to the relationship between ourselves and God.

(*b*) Feeling is only one part of meditation. Even if we cannot feel as we ought, we can think, and can make resolutions to act as though we did feel. We do not refuse to read a friend's letter because we do not feel in the mood: we do violence to our feelings; we read it, and force ourselves to hide our unwillingness even from ourselves. The obligation to meditate when we are not in the mood is of a piece with the obligation in ordinary life to be kind and helpful to our acquaintances, and still more to our friends and our family.

(*c*) The value of meditation is not gauged by immediate results. Here again ordinary life teaches us the facts. Our mental attitude, our general outlook on life, on which our actions depend, is the result of a thousand influences of which we thought nothing at the time, influences which we may have resented, and at which we felt bored. (Thus, for example, all the patriotic speeches, articles, songs, conversations, etc., that we have heard, have helped to form our patriotic attitude—assuming we are patriotic. Apart from these influences we should not know even what patriotism means.)

The same principle applies to our meditations on religious subjects.

(*d*) Lastly, we remember that meditation is not a one-sided affair. If we talk to God, God talks to us; if we try to meditate about God, God helps us to meditate. Meditation is not an effort of our own; it is a supernatural process in which we are assured of God's co-operation.

In using such set times of meditation we remember how Christ prepared Himself and His disciples for the great act in the long battle of Armageddon by constant retirements, long nights spent in prayer, and familiar informal intercourse. It was this discipline of the parade ground that made the victory possible.

6. THE BIBLE AS THE CHIEF AID TO MEDITATION

Speaking roughly, books that are worth reading at all are worth reading twice; and the best books are worth reading many times. And the man of one book, as some one has said, is always formidable—a man to be taken into account. He may not know many things, but what he does know he knows well; he has his material at his command; and if his book is comprehensive in its range he can generally find something in it to fit the circumstances, even circumstances that might seem at first sight to be entirely novel.

What is true of books in general is still more true of the Bible. Apart from all questions of infallibility, of verbal inspiration, of absolute authority, and the like, it contains the clearest, truest, and most powerful expression of the main essentials of the Christian life.

Men make themselves familiar with modern writers;

but in nine cases out of ten tastes change in the course of a few generations, and often enough a man's own taste changes in his own lifetime. The favourite authors that seemed once so impressive lose their savour. We may go on enjoying them, but we do not regard them now as a guide to the problems of existence.

We are puzzled in consequence. We should like to be masters of one book at least. We see the advantages of concentration clearly enough. But which is that book to be? St. Francis de Sales carried about for years Scupoli's "Spiritual Combat"—"that dear book." But then St. Francis weakened the force of his example by going off and writing a book of his own, "The Devout Life." We suffer from an excessive profusion of claimants for our homage. Well, we can always fall back on, we can always begin with, the Bible; and we can end with it too. We can be sure that both from a literary and a devotional standpoint we have here a book that we need never grow out of, but one that we shall grow into, and that will grow into us—a book in the study of which we cannot waste our time.

Certainly we may and should make use of other books beside the Bible. No one is meant to concoct out of it for himself the essentials of the Christian life. Let us by all means study some systematic account of these essentials. But having done this, and at the same time that we are doing this, we fall back on the Bible to endorse, drive home, and enrich the outline of those principles that the Church has taught us.

7. Note

The following quotation (from an article in the *Spectator* some years ago) illustrates and emphasizes the value and influence of meditation.

We may admit the truth of what it says on this point, even though, from an historical point of view, we dispute the application of its theories to the particular cases which are used to illustrate them.

"There is a passage in one of Lord Rosebery's speeches which has always seemed to us one of the happiest efforts of his admirable eloquence. He is speaking of Cromwell: 'He was a practical mystic, the most formidable and terrible of all combinations. A man who combines inspiration apparently derived—in my judgment really derived—from close communion with the supernatural and the celestial, a man who has that inspiration and adds to it the energy of a mighty man of action, such a man as that lives in communion on a Sinai of his own, and when he pleases to come down to this world below seems armed with no less than the terrors and decrees of the Almighty Himself.'

"This is the common explanation of the practical force of the Puritan, and probably it is the correct one. 'He prostrated himself,' as Macaulay wrote, 'in the dust before his Maker; but he set his foot upon the neck of his King. . . . They brought to civil and military affairs a coolness of judgment and an immutability of purpose which some writers have thought inconsistent with their religious zeal, but which were in fact the necessary effects of it. The intensity of their feelings on one

subject made them tranquil on every other. One overpowering sentiment had subjected to itself pity and hatred, ambition and fear. Death had lost its terrors and pleasure its charms.' Knox 'never feared the face of man' because he so utterly feared the face of God; and doubtless their complete preoccupation with the things of the spirit explains their contemptuous mastery over the things of the world."

CHAPTER XL

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES AND OUR FAITH AND FEELINGS

1. CONTACT WITH GOD THROUGH THE CHURCH IS COMPATIBLE WITH INTELLECTUAL DOUBT

If we are loyal members of the Church, obeying its teaching and receiving its sacraments, we are in contact and union with the life of God. Our experience of this union will be present from the first, and will grow stronger and deeper as time goes on. The experience may not be a fully conscious experience. We may have our doubts; but we need not take our doubts too seriously. We can say with Browning's Bishop:

What matter though I doubt at every pore,
Head doubts, heart doubts, doubts at my fingers' ends,
Doubts in the trivial work of every day,
Doubts at the very bases of my soul
In those grand moments when she probes herself?
With me faith means perpetual unbelief
Kept quiet like the snake 'neath Michael's foot,
Who stands calm just because he feels it writhe.

Objection

Opponents may say that we are hypnotizing ourselves; that we make up our minds to believe; and therefore we do believe.

REPLY

The objector's argument may be turned against himself. If the wish creates belief, the absence of a wish militates against belief. If we have no interest in believing in God's existence, we shall not take the trouble to see what is the *evidence* for God's existence.

We need not be in the least afraid of the accusation that our religious life is influenced by the wish to believe. How could it be otherwise in practical matters? If we refused to listen to our wishes, we could not even get our most elementary experiences. We could not even get our conviction of the value of a moral life if we did not wish to believe it valuable. Wanting to believe in its value is the main condition of getting the experience that it *is* valuable. If we don't want to take things seriously that is the sure way to lose our sense that they *are* serious.

What applies to the moral life applies also to Religion.

If we stop living the religious life in order to settle our faith speculatively we shall very likely lose what faith we have, just as a man will fall off his bicycle if he ceases to keep it on the move while he thinks how he steers it.

However far you carry the process of vivisection you never discover the secret of life, though life is, nevertheless, a fact of immediate experience; and if you carry the process too far you find that you are dissecting a corpse.

A similar fate may overtake us in our attempts to vivisect or to analyse the living reality of our spiritual life.

We must think while we live, not stop living in order to think. There is safety in going on. He that runs may be allowed to read (and think); but he that stops running may never be able to get started again.

This is the moral of the following verse:

The Centipede was happy, quite,
Until the toad, for fun,
Said—"Pray, which leg goes after which?"
This wrought his mind to such a pitch
He lay distracted in a ditch,
Considering how to run.

2. SIMILARLY, REAL CONTACT WITH GOD IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE ABSENCE OF DEEP FEELING

Objection

This theory makes outward observance hypocritical and formal. It is hypocrisy to say our prayers or to make our communions when we are not in the mood to do so.

Reply

Outward observance is not necessarily formal or hypocritical, even when our moods or feelings are not in harmony with such observances.

In society life, e.g. in our families, we must be kind outwardly whether at the time we happen to feel kind or not. I am not excused from saying "Good morning," "Please," and "Thank you" because I happen to have got up with a headache.

The man, in fact, who tries to be pleasant when he feels the reverse may be in a better condition than the man who is pleasant when circumstances have made the effort easy.

The same argument can be applied to the outward observance of our religious duties. No hypocrisy is involved if we act from a real intention to please God and to obey His laws.

In saying that the importance of moods and feelings must not be exaggerated, we do not imply that they are of no importance at all. It is a fallacy—a contradiction in terms—when men advise us "to do our best and let our feelings take care of themselves." For doing our best includes doing whatever will help to make our feelings what they ought to be. We should not be doing our best if we were to act as though our feelings were a matter of indifference. It is a duty to do our work, even though we have no feeling of enthusiasm or even of interest in what we do; but this does not mean that we are to be *contented* to have no interest or enthusiasm.

These considerations apply to the duties that are specifically concerned with our religion, i.e. to our prayers and our sacraments.

PART VIII

SUPPLEMENTARY

CHAPTER XLI

AUTHORITY AND REVELATION

In a sense all knowledge is revealed knowledge since God co-operates with our faculties in which He is immanent. But on the traditional view God reveals truths to us through some external authority which it is reasonable for us to trust, though we have not conclusive evidence for the truths in question taken by themselves. It is objected that the only evidence for spiritual truths lies in their "intrinsic excellence." But this evidence is insufficient. Other objections considered. Revelation viewed as the making known to us of God Himself in His personal reality has been considered in a previous chapter.

It is the aim of this chapter to discuss at greater length how Christ reveals to us spiritual truths about God and about our relationship to God. A more fundamental point, i.e. that Christ reveals to us God Himself, has been discussed in a previous chapter.

I

POINTS GENERALLY ADMITTED

The following points are, or ought to be, admitted both by traditionalists and by modernists, although there may be considerable variation in the terminology employed.

1. THE MEANING OF REVELATION

In the widest sense of the word we may say simply that God *reveals something when He makes it known.*

This definition may be too wide, but it is correct as far as it goes, and it is enough for the purpose in hand.

2. ALL OUR KNOWLEDGE, WHETHER RELIGIOUS OR OTHERWISE, IS THE RESULT OF REVELATION

All good gifts come from God, and our knowledge is one of them. Most theists, Christian or otherwise, are agreed on this. We get knowledge by the use of our faculties, and God has not only given us our faculties, He is "immanent" in us and helps us to use our faculties rightly.

It follows that we cannot, in this general sense of revelation, contrast "revealed knowledge" with "unrevealed," nor what we find out by revelation with what we find out by "unaided human reason." For all knowledge is revealed knowledge, and our human reason is never "unaided" as long as we use it rightly.

We use the word Reason throughout in its widest sense, as including all our faculties, not reasoning only, but also insight, experience, etc. We need not discuss the differences between these faculties or the relationships between them.

3. TWO ELEMENTS IN REVELATION

A man may make a distant object clearer to us either by bringing it nearer or (conceivably) by improving our eyesight; i.e. either by what he does outside us, or by what he does within us. Similarly there are two elements in the process by which God makes known to us truths, spiritual or otherwise. These two elements

are distinct, although they must both be present if knowledge is to be gained. Both are accompanied by Revelation, and so they may be called respectively " the external " and " the internal " elements in Revelation.

(*a*) *External Element in Revelation.*

We get to know spiritual truths through things outside us. This implies that God has disposed things outside us in such a way that they teach us spiritual truths. For example: We get to know something of God's power, or wisdom, through Nature; Nature reveals God; the heavens declare His glory. Again, we get to know something of God through the laws of duty (which are outside us in the sense that they are independent of us—we find them, we do not make them). Such laws, we say, point to a Lawgiver.

Once more, we learn something of spiritual truths through other men, e.g. through groups of men whose agreement lends weight to their convictions; or through exceptional men whose faculties exceed our own. We call such exceptional men prophets or religious experts. Our Lord is often called (even by men who are not believers in the traditional sense) the supreme instance of such experts.

Such men tell us what we could not have found out for ourselves, although, when they have told us, we may be able to see for ourselves (just as we can when a mathematician has worked out a problem) that what they say is true.

Since it is God Who has disposed such outward things —nature, duty, or men—in the way He has, we may

call their share in our knowledge the External Element in Revelation.

(*b*) *Internal Element in Revelation.*

External Revelation by itself is obviously insufficient to create knowledge. You cannot make an object visible to a man if he keeps his eyes shut, or if he has no eyes. Similarly, nothing outside a man can make a truth known to him unless he possesses the faculties for perceiving that truth, and unless he uses those faculties. Now God not only disposes things outside us so that they are fitted to teach us spiritual truths ; He influences our faculties so that we can learn the lessons that these things teach. God co-operates with, He inspires, our faculties ; He is immanent, not only in Nature, but also in Man. Thus we might call the element of Internal Revelation " Immanent " Revelation, or " Inspiration."

Differences between modern writers on these two points are more verbal than real. Thus it is a difference of terminology (so one may think) when Fairbairn says paradoxically, " God inspires ; man reveals." What Fairbairn calls Inspiration we have called Internal Revelation. But our accounts of the two processes seem to be the same.

Some modern writers have been content to define Revelation simply as " *the intensification of our powers of insight.*" This, however, leaves the element of " External " Revelation out of account ; it is also an inconsistency, for such writers are agreed, as a rule, that we may speak of God revealing Himself in Nature, and that there are degrees of such Revelation ; e.g. that God

reveals Himself more fully in organic than in inorganic nature. This admission implies that one element of Revelation consists in something that God does outside us over and above any intensification of our faculties.

4. AUTHORITY AND REASON NOT OPPOSED

We accept a statement "on authority" when we accept it because we rely on the trustworthiness of the person who makes it. We do this in ordinary life, when we accept the statements of experts, e.g. of doctors, scientists, travellers, etc. Such authority is never in ordinary life an *absolute* authority; it varies in degree; it is never above being tested.

Prima facie we should expect to find a place for authority in religion also.

And what we expect to find we do find. We find the statements of the religious experts, of the prophets, of the exceptional men, or of the groups of men, to whom we have referred; we have our "religious classics," our Creeds and Bible, in which their convictions and experiences are expressed.

We begin by accepting or respecting such statements on authority, at any rate provisionally, viewed as working principles.

Afterwards we come, or we may come, to accepting them on the internal evidence of their intrinsic reasonableness. This is the ideal to which we look forward and at which we aim.

If it is reasonable to regard a person as trustworthy, there is obviously nothing unreasonable in accepting his

statements as probably true. It would be unreasonable not to do so. It is, then, a blunder to draw a sharp contrast between accepting things on authority and accepting them on the evidence of reason.

So far both parties seem to be, or ought to be, agreed.

II

TRADITIONALIST VIEWS

The traditionalist view goes beyond these points on which it is in agreement with anti-traditionalist modernism. We may sum up this view as follows :

1. We begin with a consideration which is the most fundamental, though it is not the most obvious.

Christ reveals to us, not only or mainly *truths about God*, but *God Himself*. He makes God a reality to us. He makes Him known to us with a personal knowledge. (Compare the difference between knowing about a man through what we are told about him, and knowing the man personally—knowing the man himself.) It is this latter kind of personal knowledge which is the chief element in the Revelation made to us through the Incarnation. We can hold this point independently of questions as to the absolute authority or infallibility of statements made in the Bible about God.

This point is often ignored by both parties in the dispute. That is why we mention it here. We have discussed it in the chapter on "Christ as the Means of Knowledge." In this chapter we concern ourselves mainly with the points on which the traditionalist and the anti-traditionalist come into direct contact.

We may say, however, that this is the point implied by Bruce and other writers when they lay stress on the fact that the Incarnation (and miracles) are not to be regarded so much as the *guarantees* of a revelation (in the sense of statements of spiritual truths), but rather as actually *constituting* a revelation. (See Preface.)

2. We come next to the point with which we do concern ourselves in this chapter, a point which is the most obvious, though not the most fundamental.

Christ is the Revealer of spiritual truths. He reveals truths about the character of God, and about our relationship to God—about what God does for us, and about our duty—what we must do for God.

Thus, since we know that Christ is God, He speaks to us with divine authority. His statements are not mere working principles, to be accepted provisionally even though as yet the internal evidence for their intrinsic reasonableness seems to us absent or inconclusive.

Here we have a short statement of the difference between the views with which we are concerned.

III

OBJECTIONS AND REPLIES

This second point is denied by the anti-traditionalist (the first point does not, for the most part, come into the discussion. Neither party has grasped its importance). The following objections may be noticed, to which we reply *seriatim*:

1. Objection

Spiritual truths can only be known to us by the internal evidence of their intrinsic reasonableness. They cannot be known on the evidence of authority, not even of Christ's.

"Belief in a doctrine must rest on the evidence of reason and experience, and until it does so, a man has no right to call his beliefs his own." "A prophet must commend his message to us by awakening a response in our hearts. This is the only way in which a revelation is, or can be, made to us." * "We know where to find our religious classics, in religion as in art, not by any external guarantee of their authority, but by the appeal of their intrinsic excellence." † We may still believe, after a process of testing, what, to begin with, we accepted on authority, "but it is no longer on authority that it is believed." ‡

2. Reply

Certainly, all knowledge of spiritual truths rests *ultimately* on the appeal of intrinsic reasonableness. There cannot be an endless regress of authorities each guaranteeing the next. We must come at last to some primary authority which is trustworthy on the evidence of its intrinsic reasonableness, which has no prior authority to vouch for it.

But if I know on good evidence that a genuine

* Inge, "Faith and its Psychology," p. 81.

† Webb, "Pan-Anglican Papers."

‡ "Foundations," p. 376.

authority exists, in that case I infer that its statements are true, even when I cannot see the intrinsic reasonableness of those statements taken by themselves. Thus, if I know that Christ has a divine authority, and that He has told me of the facts of a future life and of the efficacy of asking God for what I need, I accept those statements as true. It seems absurd to say that belief in such statements is "not my own," even though they "do not awaken a response in my heart," even though their intrinsic reasonableness is not endorsed or fully endorsed by my reason, insight, and experience.

3. Objection

No such divine authority exists. "The infallible Book has gone the way of the infallible Church." * To regard Christ's words as an absolute authority would leave us "at the mercy of the reporters."

4. Reply

These assertions are made, as a rule, too dogmatically. We should expect to find some disproof, or at least some notice, of the views of modern "liberal conservative" writers such as Dr. Gore, who argues for "a basis of obligatory fundamental dogma" to be received on the authority of the Church.† But such views are more commonly set aside than discussed.

The anti-traditionalist may urge that, even though

* "Foundations," p. 372.

† "Bampton Lectures," p. 184.

Christ's statements are infallible, the *record* of them is not.

But, so we may reply, the record can be relied on to give us the fundamental principles which dominate the life and teaching of Christ and the teaching of the Church. Thus, we have the divine authority we need, although the record is not infallible in all respects.

5. Objection

No such external divine authority is needed. The evidence of the intrinsic reasonableness of a truth is sufficient.

6. Reply

The evidence of intrinsic reasonableness is inadequate.

It may be true, it is true, that our reason is never unaided (when we use it rightly). Our faculties are inspired by God. But the difficulty remains of knowing when our faculties are rightly used and when they are not. On the anti-traditional view, truth is a test of revelation, but revelation is not a test of truth. We get hold of a truth through Revelation, but this does not help us to know that we have got hold of it.

Prima facie the evidence of intrinsic reasonableness is ambiguous.

Some statements, though they are intrinsically reasonable, may not appeal at all to particular individuals. They may "awaken no response" in their minds or their hearts.

Other statements may seem to give evidence of their

intrinsic reasonableness, but it by no means follows that the evidence is good evidence, or that the statements are true. Many men have been deceived even in regard to their dearest convictions. An alleged experience is by no means always a real experience. Great men have differed among themselves on great matters: Plato from Buddha, Buddha from Mohammed, Mohammed from Christ, and all of them from the learned men of our own day, as these do from each other.

Experience, in fact, does not lead a majority of men, even with the Church's beliefs before them to serve as working principles, to a full belief. It leads them, on the contrary, to a host of mutually inconsistent conclusions.

Thus we have men like Bousset, who criticize the moral principles of Christianity, and favour more modern types of character, e.g. those of Goethe and Bismarck, for which, they complain, Christianity leaves no room. Others favour the Buddhist ideal, with its desire for the suppression of desire as a thing intrinsically bad.

We have modern secularists rejecting all forms of theism in favour of a morality which is higher and nobler without it.

We have the rejection by many Liberal Protestants of the Divinity of Christ and of any present personal communion with Him, in favour of a religion in which the bare dogma of the Fatherhood of God supplies all our reasonable needs. And we may say the same of a Gospel of Immanence in which Christ is not the Son of

God in any sense in which we are not called to be sons of God too.

We have the rejection by a leading ecclesiastic of a doctrine of individual mortality which "makes the population of Heaven depend on the fluctuations of the birth-rate."

We have the rejection of petition, especially of petition for temporal blessings, in favour of "higher" forms of prayer as alone worthy of our relationship with God, *e.g.* the "prayer of quiet," or the cultivation of an attitude of simple dependence on, and resignation to, the Will of God.

We have, among Protestants, a widespread rejection of the Church's sacramental principle, and (which is one expression of that principle) of any value attached to a visible Church or an historic Episcopate, in favour of a non-sacramental religion, marked by "direct access to God."

7. Objection

These divergences are no proof against the reliability of experience. They are the result of the *absence* of experience, not of its presence. What men do experience may be taken as true; their differences are concerned with matters where experience has fallen short. I need no more distrust my experience of Christ or of the Sacraments because you do not have that experience than I need distrust my eyes because a blind man cannot see what I see. "No one of the convictions in which men have lived but has something of essential truth

behind it." * "*Teachers are generally right in what they assert; wrong in what they deny.*"

8. Reply

(*a*) We cannot separate the positive and the negative side of a statement. Modern philosophy is strong on the point that *every affirmative implies a negative.* I cannot believe a thing is white without disbelieving that it is grey or black. True, A's conviction that God is our Father leaves room for the conviction that Christ is our Mediator; but B's conviction that by filial faith and good conduct we can live, and do live, in the *closest possible* communion with God does *not* leave room for Christ as the one Mediator.

So again, the moralist who prefers the Bismarck and Goethe ideals denies *ipso facto* the supremacy of the Christian ideals.

(*b*) We have another difficulty. We cannot easily distinguish between the experiences of the experts and their interpretation of their experiences.

Thus a Roman Catholic may claim to have a direct experience of Christ's presence within the Tabernacle. A Protestant and a Unitarian might both admit that the experience in question is a real experience; but they would explain it differently. The Protestant would interpret it as an experience of Christ's presence in the *heart.* The Unitarian also would refer to a presence in the heart, but to a presence, not of Christ, but of God.

* "Foundations," p. 378.

Men's affirmations are not a very safe guide; they naturally express what they think they have experienced in the language to which they are accustomed. There is nothing in the nature of the case to tell us how much belongs to the experience and how much to the explanation.

9. Objection

A divine external authority does not invoke the Incarnation. Admitting all that you have said—admitting that an external authority is needed to give us knowledge of spiritual truths—still the existence of such an authority does not involve the doctrine of the Incarnation. It is enough for us to know that Christ was a great prophet. If we have a guarantee that His teaching is divine, it makes no difference whether He Himself is divine or not; He gives us full and certain knowledge about God and our duty. The claims of Christ are similar to the claims of Moses, only that the claims of Christ are better attested—they have better historical evidence to support them. Through Christ, regarded as an infallible prophet, we have all the certainty we need.

10. Reply

If Christ be God, the knowledge of spiritual truths brought to us by Him is more *certain*, and more *full*, and more *impressive* than the knowledge brought to us through even the greatest of the prophets. It is more *certain*, since a prophet is likely to be fallible in one or more points of his teaching. It is more *full*, since we

are sure that His revelation is meant to have about it the note of finality; it is more *impressive*, since it is brought to us by God Himself putting Himself out on our behalf.

We have dwelt on this point already in another connexion in the chapter on God as the only Object of Perfect Devotion. We saw there how the Incarnation brings home to us the perfection of God, His power, love, and condescension, and how this evokes in us the deepest devotion. The Incarnation does this just because it is the Incarnation, quite apart from all question as to the infallibility or authority of Christ's words, or of the reports of those words found in the Gospels.

God, in other words, makes Himself known to us in Christ just because Christ is God, not simply because Christ makes true statements about Him.

CHAPTER XLII

THE HOPE OF HEAVEN

Further difficulties considered.

1. THE HOPE OF HAPPINESS AN ADDITION TO OUR HAPPINESS

[In this section we adopt provisionally the *vulgar view* of Heaven which regards it simply as *a state of our own individual perfect and permanent happiness.* We leave till later the question what other elements enter into our view of Heaven, and how far its happiness has a distinctive moral character.

This view of Heaven is crude and inadequate, but it is not wrong so far as it goes. Christianity does both assert and lay stress on the absence from Heaven of any kind of unhappiness.]

The hope of any future happiness is in itself pleasant, and is therefore *ipso facto* an increase to happiness (and, conversely, a decrease of unhappiness); and the increase will vary with the greatness of the happiness hoped for, and with the intensity and confidence of the hope.

A fortiori the hope of Heaven, i.e. the hope of perfect and permanent happiness, is an addition to our happiness.

This *a priori* argument is endorsed by experience—the case is not altogether hypothetical. We must admit that at any rate some people (if we pay any respect at

all to their own account of the matter) find in this hope a great addition to their happiness, and a great alleviation of their unhappiness.

Objection

There are many people for whom the idea of Heaven has no attraction. Lack, or disuse, of the imagination has made them incapable of looking so far ahead. The prospect is too remote, too intangible, too alien from everyday life and interests to make any appeal to their feelings.

Many of these people are quite reasonably happy, and some (e.g. Professor James's "sky-blue souls" and "healthy-minded people," people of the incorrigibly cheerful Mark Tapley temperament) are even exceedingly happy, without the hope of Heaven.

Reply

The fact that some men cannot entertain the hope of Heaven does not prove that it would not be an addition to their happiness if they could and did entertain it.

Similarly, the fact that some men are happy without this hope does not prove that they would not be more happy with it. And in many cases the absence of the hope is cause of positive *unhappiness*. It is just the thoughtful and earnest men who feel the dissatisfaction most acutely. The pains bestowed in modern times on psychical research are evidence of this.

OBJECTION

If we cannot reach, we can and ought to make some approach to what we may call, for lack of a better name, the "Secular Ideal." It is to this ideal (so it is said) that the processes of evolution are bringing us—the ideal in which altruistic action has become pleasant for its own sake, in which "the idea of duty," in the sense of constraint, "has faded in proportion as moralization has increased." Under such conditions men will pursue the welfare of their fellows and of the human race in general, and in this pursuit they will find their own happiness incidentally, though they do not deliberately think about it, and certainly do not make it the motive of their actions. Their absorption in this pursuit will leave no room in their minds for the hope of any future happiness. If room for this hope were found, it would be at the expense of the happiness arising from their present pursuits, and as this happiness is the more intense they would lose rather than gain. Such men, then, are happy, but as they do not dwell on or seek their own happiness, they will not be concerned at the prospect of such happiness coming to an end at death. Again, they may feel, but they will not feel acutely or for very long, the death of friends, nor do they hope for reunion with them in the future, for there are always other men left whose welfare they can promote, and it is in this employment that their happiness consists. Doubtless there must always be some degree of physical pain and discomfort, but absorption in other men's interests will prevent antici-

pation of these evils; and the anticipation of them is worse than the actuality.

Similar considerations apply to some extent to men whose forms of happiness are purely selfish. Granted that the hope of happiness is a pleasant hope, it does not follow that such hope is an addition to the happiness of a man who is *absorbed* in the pleasures of the moment. Such hopes would distract his mind from those present and intenser pleasures. His sum total of enjoyment would be diminished rather than increased.

Reply

A man's happiness, we maintain, can never lie in the present alone. It is bad psychology to think so. His present happiness contains the thought, whether conscious or subconscious, that there will be a to-morrow, and that to-morrow will bring with it new happiness, even though the form of this happiness is not distinctly conceived. Certainly, the converse statement will be admitted; i.e. a man has his present happiness decreased by the thought that the moment has arrived when he must lay aside the work in which he is interested, and say a final farewell to the friends he loves. The loss of friends, and the anticipation of such loss, must be felt acutely, even under ideal conditions, unless a spirit of detachment is cultivated to a degree that to most men seems neither possible nor desirable.

Some degree of hope, then, in the future, is an element in the happiness of the present, and if this hope is the hope of perfect and permanent happiness, i.e. of Heaven,

our present happiness is correspondingly increased. The assertion that there is no room for it, and no need for it, cannot be allowed.

OBJECTION

Admitting that the hope of to-morrow's happiness is an element in, and an addition to, our present happiness, it does not follow that we are the happier for hoping in an eternity of to-morrows. Such a prospect, even if it could be entertained, might be rather appalling than otherwise. We can have too much of a good thing. An eternity of days each like the last would be an eternity of *ennui*.

REPLY

(*a*) On the assumption that Heaven can only be regarded as an endless continuation of successive moments of time, this objection might hold good. But there is no reason why this assumption should be granted. On the contrary, Heaven is rather to be regarded as a *timeless* state. The conception has its own difficulties, but for the present purposes we need not go into them. We may be content to say that the God who is capable of making a Heaven is capable also of making it a state of perfect and permanent happiness.

2. THE HOPE OF HAPPINESS IS NOT AN IGNOBLE MOTIVE

[In this section we continue to use the word Heaven in the aforesaid restricted sense, as a state of our own perfect and permanent happiness.]

OBJECTION

The hope of Heaven is a selfish hope, and is therefore immoral, and acts done for its sake are likewise selfish and immoral.

REPLY

The hope of one's own happiness may be a *non-moral* hope, but it is absurd to say that it is positively *immoral.* No one thinks that the hope of even the lower forms of personal pleasure is necessarily immoral, e.g. a man's looking forward to smoking a pipe. Nor does any one think that it is necessarily immoral to *act* on such a motive. It is not wicked for a man to go into a shop to buy tobacco, i.e. to act from a motive of his own happiness.

It is therefore not immoral to hope for Heaven (even if Heaven were nothing but a state of our own happiness), nor to act with the hope of Heaven as a motive.

OBJECTION

It is at any rate more noble to do right without hope of happiness than with it.

REPLY

Suppose that I and my friend are working from equally unselfish noble motives. Some one offers me the hope of an increase in my wages. It seems obvious that the addition of a new non-moral motive does not necessarily subtract from the aforesaid unselfish motives. I am no less unselfish than I was previously. I am still

on the same level of "nobility" as my friend. To assert the contrary is like saying that I must necessarily be weaker than he is because I am lifting a weight with a lever while he is using his hands only.

3. THE HOPE OF HAPPINESS HAS INDIRECT MORAL VALUE

[The word Heaven is still used in the restricted sense previously defined.]

Objection

Even if the hope of Heaven as a motive is admitted to be not immoral, it is nevertheless *practically and morally valueless.*

It is true that in ordinary life a reward is often given for outwardly moral actions quite apart from the motive with which they are done, e.g. a prize at school for punctuality. Such rewards are useful; they promote, as they are meant to do, outwardly moral conduct.

But Heaven is *ex hypothesi* the reward of actions that are inwardly, and not merely outwardly, moral, i.e. of actions done with a distinctively moral motive.

Obviously, therefore, we cannot gain Heaven by acting for the sake of Heaven, since to act for the sake of Heaven is to act for our own happiness, i.e. to act for a motive which is non-moral. To act for the sake of Heaven is to defeat our own ends. People who are outwardly moral, or in so far as they are outwardly moral, for the sake of Heaven, put themselves, through

this error of judgment, to a great deal of trouble, and lose their reward after all.

Reply

(*a*) Even if we take Heaven to be a reward in the ordinary sense of the word, we can still say that *the hope of Heaven has, indirectly, a practical and moral value.*

Thus, a man has a real desire to do his work well, and to do it for duty's sake, but finds it hard to overcome his temptation, e.g. to idleness. The hope of a reward or the fear of a punishment may help him to act as he ought. Doubtless, so far as he acts for the sake of such non-moral motives, his action is non-moral; but the fact remains that his temptation to idleness has been for once overcome, and so far weakened, so that in future the moral motive, e.g. the motive of duty for duty's sake, has freer play, a better chance of developing itself; and thus indirectly the hope of a reward has had moral value.

This explains how in ordinary life the natural punishments of bad conduct, e.g. ruin of health through intemperance, or ruin of fortune through indolence, and also the punishments inflicted by man, are freely pointed out, and (in the latter case) used, by educators. And yet no one charges such men with inculcating a merely prudential morality (unless such motives are dwelt upon exaggeratedly, or to the exclusion of higher motives).

These considerations apply *mutatis mutandis* to the hope of Heaven. By checking or holding down immoral motives of which we want to be rid it gives freer play

to disinterested love of God or goodness, and thus it has moral value.

(*b*) Although an act done for a non-moral motive is in itself non-moral, yet the preliminary act of calling into play such a non-moral motive to help us to do what we ought is in itself moral.

Thus if I get up early in the morning to do my work because my alarm rings loud and long, and is so far away that I must get up to stop it, my act so far may be non-moral. But the act of setting it the night before, with this object in view, was a highly moral act.

So if a man keeps himself sober from fear of punishment, his act is so far non-moral. But the act by which a man, knowing his own weakness, puts himself under rigorous discipline voluntarily, and calls to mind the punishments in question, is a highly moral act.

These arguments apply to the man who calls up the hope of Heaven (and, we may say, the fear of Hell) to assist him in acting as he knows he ought to act, and as he really wants to act. In fact, a man really *ought* to call up such ideas to his assistance. Virtue is not so easy that he can afford to throw away any hope that offers itself. To ignore such helps is positively immoral.

4. THE HOPE OF PERFECTION IS A POSITIVELY MORAL AND NOBLE MOTIVE

[In this section we adopt a more adequate view of Heaven. We regard it no longer as a merely non-moral state of our own perfect happiness, but *as a state of perfect love—a state in which we love God and each other*,

perfectly and for ever. Thus it is an unselfish state, for love is the antithesis of selfishness. It is a happy state, for perfect love unimpeded and undistracted is happiness.]

(*a*) All the previous arguments which have shown that the hope of Heaven regarded as an accompaniment of, and as a motive of, conduct, is practically and morally valuable applied *a fortiori* to the hope of Heaven regarded in the more adequate way defined above.

(*b*) It is admittedly moral to hope that we shall become *better men*, to hope for the *happiness* of being better men, and to act with such hopes as a *motive*. Such happiness is happiness of a moral kind.

Thus a philanthropist looks forward to becoming more philanthropic, and to an increase of happiness in being more philanthropic. The more happiness he finds in his work the better man he is ; he is not a better man for doing his work against the grain, for it is not a mark of virtue to work grudgingly. At present he has many selfish desires which often make it difficult for him to rouse himself at the call of duty. He looks forward to the time when the decay of such desires shall have ceased to make virtue painful to him, and the hope of reaching so happy a consummation acts as an element in his motive.

(*c*) It is therefore right and moral for us to hope for Heaven in which perfect goodness, and the happiness of perfect goodness, will be inseparably united.

(*d*) Heaven is a state of *perfect friendship* with God. To act for the sake of this perfect friendship is moral.

Man is a social being, and naturally hopes for friendship with his fellow-men, and for their love and sympathy and approval. We should not consider a man more moral, but less moral, if he were perfectly indifferent to all such considerations.

And further, it is right, not merely to hope for the increase of such friendship, but also to make this increase of it a motive of our action.

Certainly, if I oblige my friend for what I can get out of him, my action is non-moral. But if I oblige him in the hope that by doing so my friendship with him will become intense and intimate, my action in doing so is unexceptionally moral. Friendship is *ex vi termini* a state of unselfishness, and it is a paradox to say that an action done for the sake of promoting a condition which is the diametrical opposite of unselfishness can be a selfish action.

Objection

St. Thomas à Kempis says, "Love to be unknown." It is more noble to do good and to remain unknown than to wish to be known and approved and sympathized with.

Reply

We have discussed a similar objection above. Even if the hope of winning a good man's approval were a non-moral hope (which we deny), yet the presence of such non-moral motive does not necessarily make me less moral than the man who acts without those influ-

ences. I am only less moral than he if my moral motive is less intense than his.

But, as said above, the desire of winning a good man's approval and of increasing my friendship with him is a highly moral motive, not simply a non-moral one.

The quotation from St. Thomas does not bear out the contention it is meant to support. St. Thomas was certainly not indifferent to God's approval. If he wished to remain unknown to man, it was that he might be less distracted in learning to know God and being known by Him.

The secular moralist would probably allow that it is right for us to love, and to manifest our love and approval of, other men so as to encourage them in their efforts. This implies that such manifestation is good for them. But if it is good for them, it is good for us; it is right for us to entertain the hope of such love and approval, and to let this hope influence and encourage us, i.e. to let it be a part of our motive.

And these considerations taken from our relationship with our fellow-men apply with still greater force to our relationship with God, which, when perfected, constitutes what we mean by Heaven.

5. THE WITNESS OF EXPERIENCE

Non-theistic morality thinks of human life, if it thinks at all, as a transitory episode inexplicably existing in the middle of an unfriendly universe in which in the course of time it will be absorbed. It fails, consequently, as a rule, to take that life very seriously. It

tends, as far as moral convictions are concerned, to compromise. "Be reasonably moral," it says, "but keep an eye on the main chance." Heroics may be very well for certain temperaments, but they are "not good enough for me." "Be good," is its advice; but it adds in an emphatic aside, "Not too good."

When non-theistic morality does retain the ideal of complete devotion, it tends, like Buddhism, to a pessimistic attitude to life in general. So writes Romanes, the distinguished biologist and pupil of Darwin, who, however, before his death won his way back to his religion. "When I think," he says, "of the appalling contrast between the hallowed glory of that creed which once was mine, and the lonely mystery of existence as now I find it, I ever feel it impossible to avoid the sharpest pang of which my nature is susceptible."

Such men often do their duty, and do it well, but they do it with a kind of defiance, holding at bay the secret conviction that the Universe is an alien Universe which takes no interest in their moral efforts. Their tone for the most part is by no means of the "sky-blue" order, but is "silver-grey" at the best.

Even those men who preserve their serenity under such circumstances fail to display the natural, spontaneous, buoyant cheerfulness that marks the Christian saint. Their cheerfulness has the note of defiance or is the result of distraction—of a refusal to look the facts of life steadily in the face. They are cheerful in spite of the sadness of life, not because, like the Christian (who is really a Christian), they have embraced that sadness

as a cross and made it a means, the best means, and a means which they would not do without even if they could, to raise themselves even on earth into the secret place of the Most High.

Objection

The Prophets of the Old Testament, who are sometimes said to represent the high-water mark of religious feeling, did actually maintain their moral earnestness in the face of their vagueness of belief in individual immortality. Yet they show no sense even of the need of such a hope. The eternity of God is enough for them.

We are also referred to the " sunny optimism " of the Greeks, and to the earnestness of Buddhism.

Reply

The Prophets belonged to a period when the value of the human individual was merged in the value of the race or nation. We cannot put ourselves back into this attitude, and we would not if we could, for our appreciation of the individual's value is actually regarded by us as in itself a mark of moral progress, and this belief is certainly supported and endorsed by our belief in his further existence.

Again, the Old Testament writings, and the writings of the Prophets themselves, show an increasing regard for this value of the individual, and a correspondingly increasing dissatisfaction with the prevailing ignorance of the life that lies beyond the grave.

As to the "sunny optimism" of the Greeks, it did not exist. They manifest, on the contrary, a very strong undercurrent of melancholy from primitive Homeric times (cf. the description of Hades given to Odysseus by Achilles) to the times of Aristotle ("Death is the greatest of evils because it is an End").

Buddhism does look forward to the cessation of all existence, existence being on the whole regarded as *the* evil *par excellence.* This attitude endorses the Christian position; it shows that the Buddhist also is not content with the present, and makes a future reward, i.e. the cessation of existence, a motive for moral earnestness. If he thought of life as a good, he, like the Christian, would wish to have it more abundantly.

6. THE "INCENTIVE" OR "STIMULUS" THEORY

Many writers on the traditional side made a distinction. The hope of Heaven, they say, is meant to be a *stimulus* or *incentive* to conduct; it is not, or ought not to be, a *motive.* In this way they vindicate the frequency with which the word reward is used in the New Testament.

This distinction, however, cannot be strictly maintained.

The hope of future goodness and happiness is bound to have some practical influence on our actions.

Now a hope that influences us, that we *allow* to influence us, that we deliberately call to mind and dwell upon—such a hope, although we may choose to call it

a stimulus, can hardly be distinguished from a motive, although it may be a subsidiary one.

7. CONCLUSION

The hope of Heaven, as an accompaniment of conduct and as a motive of conduct, is morally valuable; it is, in fact, not merely a means to, but an element in, good conduct.

But if traditionalists or psychologists still object to using the word "motive" of our hope of Heaven, we may be content to drop that particular term, and to say that at any rate the hope of Heaven is valuable for the moral influence that it exercises on our actions, that we should allow it to influence us, that we should cultivate it deliberately, and should habitually recollect it.

CHAPTER XLIII

THE ATONEMENT: THE INSUFFICIENCY OF HUMAN PENITENCE

OUR PARDON DEPENDS ON SOMETHING MORE THAN OUR PENITENCE

REPENTANCE in itself (on the traditional view) is not sufficient to be the sole means of pardon. Christ's work FOR us is also necessary. The conviction of the Christian world is expressed in the hymn:

Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears for ever flow,
All for sin could not atone;
Thou must save, and Thou alone.

The existence of sacrificial atoning rites in the more highly developed religions bears witness to the conviction that repentance is not in itself sufficient.

A similar conviction has existed from the first in the Christian Church.

The persistence of the conviction, in the face of very obvious objections constantly urged, is some evidence of its truth.

OBJECTION

The hymn is wrong. If my tears did flow as they ought, and if my zeal were resolute and persevering—if,

in other words, my penitence were full and real—this WOULD atone for sin. Nothing more could possibly be required.

(Moberly's view may be thought to imply this conclusion. But we must notice that in any case the fourth line of the hymn holds good; since our penitence depends on union with Christ, it is true ultimately that our salvation is due to Him; "He must save, and He alone.")

We may follow up the objector's argument.

It is only just, he will urge, that a man should be treated as he is, not as he was. The sinner, if His repentance (through Christ's work in him) is complete, is a sinner no longer. In this case he must not be treated as a sinner. If God withheld pardon from him, that *would* be treating him as a sinner.

And the argument, if it is worked out, takes us further. It leads us to a paradoxical conclusion. It blots out the place of pardon altogether.

For if God pardons, He must pardon something or somebody—the word pardon implies an object. But on this theory no object of pardon exists. The repentant sinner is no longer a sinner. And you cannot pardon *an innocent man.* Neither can you pardon the innocent man's *past sins.* For in the first place they do not exist; and in the second place there is no meaning in pardoning sins apart from the sinner. How can there be? Sins can't hang suspended in space. Sins, like virtues, must be attached to persons. Neither can you pardon the GUILT of an innocent man. His guilt is

removed by his penitence. Where there is no present sin there is no present guilt.

Neither can you say that to receive the repentant sinner back into favour is the same as pardoning him. Of course God receives him back into favour. What else can God do? He must recognize the facts.

In human affairs it takes an effort to receive the repentant man back into favour. My feelings are not altogether under my control, and my feeling of disapproval may persist even when the cause of it is removed. I have to repress that feeling when the sinner repents. Furthermore, my knowledge is not infallible. I suspect the reality of the sinner's repentance. I may want to test it by not showing my favour too soon.

But even in this case of human affairs, my receiving of the men is not pardon really; it is only a recognition of the facts made more or less difficult by the difficult conditions of human life. And in the case of God no such difficulties exist, and no such effort is needed. He sees at once when the sinner is sincerely repentant, and He has no struggle with natural dislikes. God receives the sinner back into favour automatically, and this restoration is not a pardon.

The conclusion would seem to be that, as we have said, there is no place for pardon left. The word has no meaning. The only meaning it could have would be the restoration to favour of the sinner who has NOT repented. And neither God nor men are called upon to do that.

Reply

The argument is extraordinarily plausible.

We must content ourselves with saying this: that it is too paradoxical to win acceptance. It cuts against human experience; it proves too much.

There is a place left for pardon.

The repentant sinner does need pardon. He knows it beyond the possibility of a doubt. He prays daily, not only that he may repent, but that he may be pardoned when he has repented. Even when he has repented he does not claim pardon as a right; nor does he assume that by virtue of his repentance he is received back into favour automatically. He needs an act of pardon viewed as a distinct gift on the part of God.

CHAPTER XLIV

THE ATONEMENT: THEORIES OF RETRIBUTIVE AND OF VICARIOUS PUNISHMENT

1. STATEMENT

THE violated law of righteousness demands retributive punishment.

Retribution is pain inflicted, not as discipline, not as a means to repentance, but as the absolute due of sin.

Christ bore the pain of retribution on the Cross.

As to the effect of this on ourselves two views may be held:

Either, in virtue of our union with Christ, we, in some mystical way, share in this retributive punishment;

Or, His pain, His "punishment," was strictly vicarious. He suffered instead of us, so that we do not have to suffer retributive pain, though we do have to suffer the pain of penitence and disciplinary pain.

Thus the demands of the law of righteousness were satisfied.

2. OBJECTIONS

(*a*) *The retributive theory of punishment is irrational even in the case of the* IMPENITENT. If penitence is impossible, still two evils are greater than one; im-

penitence plus pain (when there is nothing to gain by pain) is a worse evil than impenitence minus pain. So Dean Rashdall suggests (in his "Problem of Good and Evil") in arguing that the annihilation of the finally impenitent is more reasonable than their eternal punishment.

(*b*) *The retributive theory is still more irrational in the case of the* PENITENT.

The objection repeats a line of thought that we have considered already in another application. It runs as follows:

It is just that a man should be treated as he is, not as he was, i.e. as he is not. It is, also, strictly speaking, the sinner, not the sin, that deserves punishment.

If this be the case, how can we speak of retribution being due to the penitent? Retribution might have been due to him when he was a sinner, but when he has ceased to be a sinner what place is there left for retribution? If retribution is due to a man so far only as he is identified with sin, how can it still be due when he has ceased to be identified with sin?

The idea, indeed, of retribution being due to the penitent for his past sins seems to rest on a wrong idea of retribution.

Retribution is the accompaniment of the present, not a wage due to the past. In the case of the lost we have of late years had the point emphasized that they are where they are from an inward necessity. Being what they are, they can be no otherwhere than where they are.

(*c*) *On the retributive theory the Passion was either inadequate or unnecessary for our salvation.*

The Passion was *inadequate* if the retribution due to sin is an infinite retribution. For obviously Christ did not suffer an infinite penalty. Even if His sufferings could be regarded as infinite in intensity, they were not infinite in duration. Christ did not suffer the pain of the lost.

The Passion was *unnecessary* if the retribution due to sin is not infinite, since men could have borne a *finite* amount of sufferings for themselves. (On some views men do have to bear this retributive suffering in a finite degree in Purgatory.)

Can we say that, since Christ was God, His sufferings, though not infinite, might nevertheless be taken as *qeuivalent* for such infinite sufferings as are borne by the lost ?

But if this were the case, the argument would, on the traditional view, prove too much ; it would prove that there was no need for the sufferings of the lost. Atonement would have been made for them also.

As a matter of fact, though attempts have been made to establish such an equivalence, the best writers (in modern times at any rate), e.g. Dale, make no such attempt. Many of them have protested against such attempts as at once irreverent and impossible. If this is the case (as it indeed appears to be), what can we say for an " explanation " of the conditions of forgiveness which, at the critical moment, has to admit the existence of an insoluble mystery ? The

mystery may be there, but a mystery is not an explanation.

(*d*) *The retributive theory offers no plausible explanation of the connexion between Christ's Passion and our forgiveness.*

If Christ's sufferings are to be regarded as a vicarious punishment, as, that is, the punishment of a third party *as* a third party, we have the old difficulties to meet about the apparent arbitrariness of the transaction.

These difficulties are not removed by the suggestion that Christ propitiated His own wrath as much as the Father's, although we do certainly dispose in this way of the accusation that there is a division in the Godhead —an angry Father appeased by a compassionate Son.

If, on the other hand, Christ's vicarious punishment is not purely vicarious, we are still not out of our difficulties.

Dale suggests tentatively that in some way we bear Christ's punishment ourselves. But it is not easy to attach any intelligible meaning to this suggestion.

We can share in a real sense in Christ's "penitence"; that can be, and is, imparted to us, and we can feel it working in us.

But how can we share in another person's punishment when we do not undergo that punishment?

3. CONCLUSION

The objector has the best of the case, and it is safer to fall back on other explanations, i.e. that Christ's work in us is the means of true repentance, and His

work for us as our Intercessor based on His sacrifice on the Cross is effective over and above our repentance.

And yet we may still think that there is something, or even a great deal, in a theory which has had, and still has, so firm a hold on Christian conviction.

CHAPTER XLV

DUTIES OF FAITH AND BELIEF

Faith in the sense of trust in a person must be distinguished from belief. Various meanings of belief. How far faith and belief are duties.

1. FAITH AS TRUST

FAITH, in its deepest sense, is trusting in, relying on, or believing in a person or thing. We contrast it with beliefs or convictions *about* a person or thing. I may believe, for instance, that my Swiss guide was born in 1880, but my belief in the date of his birth is a different sort of thing from my trust in him on the mountains. Conviction or belief in God's existence is one thing; trust in God is another and deeper thing.

2. FAITH AS THE WILL TO HOLD FAST OUR CONVICTIONS OR OUR KNOWLEDGE

Doubtless Belief, in the narrow sense of conviction, includes a volitional element, as in fact do all mental processes. The faculties of the mind are never found working entirely apart. Faith is, however, sometimes used in a sense in which the volitional element is put in the foreground. It implies the resolution to HOLD FAST our convictions and our knowledge (e.g. of God and of the truths of Christianity), not *without* reason or *against* reason, but against temptations to lose them.

Thus Dean Rashdall says,* "Faith is used . . . in a great variety of senses . . . but it would be safe to say that for many purposes and in many connexions, religious faith means the deliberate adoption by an effort of the will, as practically certain for purposes of action and feeling, of a religious belief which to the intellect is, or may be, merely probable. For purposes of life it is entirely reasonable to treat probabilities as certainties." Faith, in this volitional sense of the word, is obviously not incompatible with knowledge. A thing may be known to us, but we still need faith, in the sense of the will to hold such knowledge fast.

3. BELIEF IN THE SENSE OF CONVICTION

Belief is often used in the sense of thinking or opinion. Religious belief means something more than this. It implies conviction. Conviction may not amount to certainty or knowledge, but it is a practical assurance that makes action right and reasonable.

4. FAITH DEPENDS ON BELIEF (OR CONVICTION)

Obviously, if I trust God, I must have the belief, knowledge, or conviction that He exists and is trustworthy.

5. DUTY OF FAITH AND OF BELIEF OR CONVICTION

(*a*) *On the Christian view faith is, generally speaking, a duty.*

We say "generally speaking" to guard against the

* "Philosophy and Religion," p. 152.

idea that belief is a duty when (as in the case of the heathen) men have perhaps never heard of Christianity, or when, as in other cases, men have had no reasonable chance of taking its claims into consideration.

At any rate if we have a reasonable belief or conviction or knowledge about Christian claims, it is a duty to hold these convictions fast. Similarly, if we have the belief, conviction, or knowledge that God is trustworthy, to trust in Him is a duty. In other words, if we have belief or conviction, the duty of faith and trust is an obvious duty.

(*b*) *On the Christian view* BELIEF (*or* CONVICTION) *is also a duty.* Christianity is not content to say: "*If* you believe there is a God, then you must hold that belief fast, and trust in God." It says absolutely (again speaking generally), "It is your *duty* to trust in God."

Now since, as we have seen, faith and trust depend on belief, the duty of faith involves the duty of belief.

OBJECTION

We cannot speak bluntly of the "duty" of conviction. Our convictions are not completely under our own control in the sense that our actions are; we cannot call up convictions to order. To force ourselves into a conviction by an act of will (assuming that this were possible) would be an act of intellectual dishonesty. To speak of the duty of belief is a paradox.

REPLY

(*a*) The "duty" of belief is not a paradox; it is a commonplace. In regard to moral beliefs we habitually speak or think of belief as a duty.

If some one said that he for his part did not believe in the duty of gratitude, we should probably tell him bluntly, without argument, that he *ought* to believe it. Believing that gratitude IS a duty is itself a duty.

Strictly speaking, perhaps, the duty of belief is an *indirect*, rather than a direct, duty; e.g. it is a duty to consider what our benefactors have done for us, and, if we do this, we are so constituted that we shall perceive the duty of being grateful. Thus, to be pedantically accurate, the duty of belief really means the duty of giving the grounds of belief a fair chance to produce their natural result in our mind.

(*b*) Lack or loss of belief is due, at any rate in many cases, to sin; and this may be admitted even by those who do not accept the claims of belief as valid.

The lack or loss of *moral* beliefs is certainly due in many cases to sin. My selfishness, for instance, may lead me to be unkind, and then, the wish being the father to the thought, I may persuade myself that the duty of kindness is an illusion, that might is right, and that a man must look first after his own interests.

Such cases are not uncommon. Lack of seriousness, the competing claims of pleasure and self-interest, sap our most fundamental beliefs. All spiritual realities become shadowy and unreal to the man who has thrown in his lot with the world and the flesh. Such a man,

even if he does not lose his intellectual vigour, does not want to believe—wants, in fact, not to believe—and the wish is fulfilled.

What is said in a parody on " Omar " is true generally :

I reasoned much about the False and True ;
But what Truth really is I never knew ;
Nor did I want to, lest the Truth should prove
An Obstacle to what I meant to do.

And Omar's overmastering love of self leads him to the palpable inconsistency expressed in the next verse :

I chattered of the Potter and the Pot ;
Denied Man right or power to choose his Lot ;
And yet I never ceased to whisper " Choose ! "
" Choose Wine, my Friend, but Virtue, choose it not."

Again, the higher elements in our nature may become atrophied, not only by the pursuit of sensual indulgence, but by absorption in altruistic interests, e.g. in business or in natural science or in politics.

So it may be with regard to our belief in the claims of Christianity. The man who gives himself no time for worship, meditation, or prayer may wake up one day to find that he has been working really for the sake of his own self-culture or even that he is working without any purpose in life at all.

Objection

It does not follow that *Christian* belief is, generally speaking, a duty. Christian belief is, in fact, not a

duty; its grounds are not sufficiently sound or sufficiently obvious.

The metaphysical, historical, and literary arguments are beyond the reach of ordinary men. Ordinary men, and still more uneducated men, could not follow these arguments even if they had time and opportunity to study them. And many of the most intellectual men do not find them obvious or sound. Professor McTaggart has said that no one has a right to be a theist unless he is a metaphysician. Most men cannot be metaphysicians; and not all metaphysicians are theists, McTaggart himself being a case in point.

If we call in feeling to our aid, our case is not improved. The grounds of belief that consist in feeling are, to put the matter bluntly, irrelevant and invalid.

REPLY

(*a*) The reasons that make for belief do not consist only in metaphysical, historical, or literary considerations. The *value* of Christianity is evidence for its truth. If we hold the initial belief that we exist for a purpose, then it is reasonable to expect that somehow or other our deepest needs are meant to find their satisfaction, and if Christianity satisfies them, then we have evidence for its validity.

(*b*) The grounds of belief may be reasonable grounds even if we cannot analyse them, or state the arguments for them in a conclusive form. *Convictions, in other words, go beyond reasoning*, though not beyond reason, and to hold such convictions fast is a duty. Most

people will admit, when they think it out, that there are such convictions ; our conviction of the fact of duty is a case in point. Our reason, as we have seen, brings us face to face with this fact. We recognize it to be a fact, though we could not prove it to be a real fact and not a fancy.

An illustration helps us. We are convinced that a certain portrait is the portrait of our friend, though we have not analysed the thousand subtle lines and shadows which enter into the likeness, and which make his face differ from the millions of other faces in the world. Even an artist could not make this analysis complete. Yet our conviction of the resemblance is a true conviction ; it is not a fancy or an illusion ; and it is a reasonable conviction, although it is not based on conscious reasoning.

In the same way, our conviction of the truth of the Christian claims is based on a recognition of the thousand ways in which they fit in with our ordinary experience, and satisfy our deepest needs and aspirations. It is a reasonable conviction though it is not based on conscious reasoning. We start with a little knowledge ; we hold the knowledge fast and act on it ; and in this way, by living the Christian life, we come into wider and closer contact with the Christian claims, and so our conviction grows into knowledge.

(*c*) Furthermore, *the evidence of feeling* is not to be ruled out of court. The feelings and emotions do enter into the process by which knowledge is gained. The feelings prove nothing of themselves, but they are a

part of the material which reason uses in constructing its conclusions. (We point this out in the next chapter.)

Apart from feeling, some kinds of knowledge are impossible. If we had no sort of feeling for beauty, we could never know the beauty of pictures. If we had no sort of feeling for the goodness of gratitude, to speak of gratitude as good would mean to us just nothing at all. We could form no sort of conception of moral truths if we made use of the conceptions supplied by the intellect alone and not by feeling also.

Speaking generally, all our ideas of the practical value of things (all " value judgments," to use the philosophical term) involve the feelings as well as the intellect.

(*d*) We admit, in conclusion, that there are many cases in which even when men possess all the dispositions for belief, the grounds for belief do not seem to them satisfactory. In such cases we cannot say dogmatically that belief is a duty or that absence of belief is sin ; though, from the Christian point of view, there is no doubt grave loss of a moral and spiritual character.

6. BELIEF DOES NOT GO BEYOND REASON

Objection

A traditionalist may say that we have left out of account the supernatural and the intuitional aspect of belief. Belief is a direct gift from God. It is an intuition which " goes beyond " reason. It is a duty to hold such belief fast, and the question as to whether such belief has reasonable grounds is irrelevant.

REPLY

(This point is discussed in the next chapter.) Belief, whether it is a gift from God or an intuition or both, cannot in any case, strictly speaking, "go beyond" reason, in the sense that we can be certain of something while at the same time our reason tells us that it is NOT certain.

CHAPTER XLVI

REASON, REASONING, AND DIRECT EXPERIENCE

Reason and reasoning are often disparaged in the interests of "direct experience." We try to show that reasoning is universally valid. It cannot be contradicted by direct experience; bad reasoning, not good, is responsible for error. Furthermore, reasoning has a universal applicability. It may use and test the truths given by direct experience, and man may use them as premisses for further conclusions. Lastly, direct experience, though it can go beyond reasoning, cannot go beyond reason, of which it is a function or aspect. The dangers of trust in direct experience are as great as the dangers of intellectualism.

PRELIMINARY POINTS

1. AIM OF CHAPTER STATED

This chapter aims at vindicating the importance of reason, reasoning, and logic, and at discussing the objections made against their importance, especially those objections urged in the interests of "direct experience."

Throughout the chapter:

We use reasoning in the sense of inference whether conscious or subconscious, and logic as synonymous with reasoning.

We use the terms immediate knowledge and intuition as synonymous with direct experience.

We assume the reality and the validity of direct experience—that direct experience, where it exists, gives us real knowledge.

2. TYPICAL OBJECTIONS

The first is from a review of Mr. Storr's "Development of English Theology."

"He [Mr. Storr] repeats the formulæ which were thought axiomatic when he was growing up, but which are being sharply questioned to-day. For instance, he tells us that neither Church nor Bible can be set up as barriers to investigation. They are admitted to possess a certain authority, 'But since it is reason itself which, after critical inquiry, determines them to be authorities, reason has both a right and a duty to subject its determinations to constant revision.'

"This, which would have been a truism twenty years ago, to-day sounds more like a paradox. Are we not repeatedly being told that the highest work of reason is not so much to put the other faculties in their place as to put itself in its place, to discover its own limitations? Mr. Storr writes as if Bergson were a negligible quantity, and whether he is right or wrong, he certainly is not that."

In the next passage the claims of reasoning are attacked in the interests of Mysticism. It is not necessary to give the author's name—the passage is typical of a thousand others in which the same views are put forward.

"Many men have tried to define Mysticism, but none

have succeeded. With an equal lack of success men have tried to define religion itself, and love, and art. And yet somehow we are not discouraged. The practice of religion goes on; art flourishes; and love triumphs. Logically and rationally it should be otherwise. We ought to grow tired of doing what we cannot understand. But we do not. And the reason for this strange persistence is plain. It is because we are conscious of powers within ourselves other and greater than intelligence. Intellect alone is not our sole touchstone with reality."

(We notice in passing that *prima facie* this passage contradicts itself. Reasoning and logic are not only opposed to direct experience; they are opposed to themselves. They lead to opposite conclusions.

"Logically and rationally," we are told, religion ought not to persist if we cannot understand it; but almost the next sentence speaks of a "plain reason" why it should persist after all. Rationally and logically, therefore, religion ought to do two different things at the same time.

It is true that this "plain reason" may be used in the sense of a *cause*, and not of a logical reason; but even so a logical reason for the persistence of religion is none the less implied.)

We quote next a classical passage of Mozley's, and some remarks made from the same point of view from the first few pages of Dr. Gore's "Roman Catholic Claims." Dr. Gore quotes Mozley's passage in full, and, like other writers, refers to it eulogistically.

"We can meet," says Dr. Gore, "these [Roman] claims made in the name of logic with a good heart. Logic, in the sense of argument, is content to ignore everything in the facts which does not suit its case. . . . It was the heretics who were notorious for their appeals to 'logic' . . . while the Church held together what a hasty logic would have torn asunder."

He then inserts Mozley's "famous passage" from which we give the following extracts:

"All the sects successively have the same watchword.

"'Be logical,' said the Arian: 'Jesus Christ is the Son of God; a son cannot be coeval with his father.'

"'Be logical,' said the Sabellian: 'God is one, therefore He cannot be three.'

"'Be logical,' says the Quaker: 'the Gospel enjoins meekness, and therefore forbids war.'

"The whole dogmatic Creed of the Church has been formed in direct contradiction to such apparent lines of consecutiveness."

3. SUMMARY OF ARGUMENT

(*a*) The conclusions of reasoning are universally valid. Direct experience cannot contradict reasoning.

(*b*) Reasoning is universally applicable: there is no sphere from which reasoning is excluded, not even the sphere of direct experience. It is not a substitute for, nor is it identical with, but it can and must accompany, direct experience.

What is thought to be a case of direct experience

often turns out on examination to be the result of reasoning.

(*c*) Reason, though not reasoning, is a necessary element in all means by which knowledge is gained. Direct experience is unable, not only to contradict, but to go beyond reason. Direct experience is, in fact, an exercise or function of reason.

4. THE CONCLUSIONS OF REASONING ARE UNIVERSALLY VALID. DIRECT EXPERIENCE CANNOT CONTRADICT REASONING

Objection

Logical conclusions, even when drawn from true and adequate premisses, are not reliable—they are not necessarily valid. It is our right, and even our duty, to be frankly illogical.

The objection stated here in its extreme form seems to be implied, if it is not so bluntly expressed, in a good deal of modern writing. Mozley's passage is a case in point.

Thus the Sabellian says, "Be logical: God is One, therefore He cannot be Three." The Catholic must, we are to suppose, retort, "No; be illogical: it does indeed follow that if God is One, He cannot be Three. But never mind logic; God is Three all the same."

Reply

(*a*) Logical conclusions when drawn from true premisses are universally valid. The objection is a paradox.

To admit it would be to contradict a commonplace of the theologians, i.e. that if faith can go beyond, yet it cannot contradict, reason.

Furthermore, the admission would make an end of all science, theological or otherwise. If such conclusions are unreliable in one case, they are unreliable in all.

The view, in fact, makes an impossible divorce in our nature. I do not stand aloof from my reasoning. My reasoning is not a separate compartment of myself which I contemplate disinterestedly from the outside. My reasoning is myself reasoning. If my reasoning comes to a certain conclusion, it is I myself who have come to that conclusion. I cannot, therefore, in the nature of the case, hold at the same time a contrary conclusion, whether derived from direct experience or from any other source.

(*b*) The critics of logic imply its validity by the use they make of it, most noticeably by the way they use it against itself.

Thus, as we have noticed, one writer, after challenging the validity of logic, immediately calls logic to his aid. He states or implies a logical argument: "*Because* we are conscious of powers greater than intelligence, *therefore*, although we do not understand religion, religion still persists, and has the right to persist."

Mozley's treatment of the subject contains the same implicit appeal to reasoning and logic:

"Be logical," he says in effect: "all the sects made use of logic, and fell into heresy; and *therefore* logic is unreliable"; or *therefore*, as Dr. Gore says, "claims

made in the name of logic can be met with a good heart."

Here is a paradox. Logic is used to cast out logic; Satan to cast out Satan; the strong man armed who defends the house turns out to be identical with the strong man who comes to dispossess him.

Not these passages only, but nearly every page of every serious book contains the same appeal to logic. Wherever we find the words "and so," "accordingly," "it follows," there the appeal to logic, reasoning, inference, stares us in the face.

Certainly the writings of Drs. Gore and Mozley are packed with closely reasoned inferences applied to the sphere dealt with by religion and direct experience. It is part of the irony of history that Dr. Gore, who has challenged logic so forcibly, is now regarded by many thinkers of a later day as an intellectualist.

The foregoing argument is a reminiscence of that used in the philosophies against an extreme form of scepticism held by the Pyrrhonists. If, as Pyrrhonism says, knowledge is impossible and everything is uncertain, Pyrrhonism itself shares in the general uncertainty, and knowledge may be possible after all. Similarly, if logic is unreliable, the argument that is used to prove it so is itself unreliable; logic expelled at one door comes back by another.

(*c*) Bad logic, not good, is the cause of error. In many of the foregoing passages the logic to which the critic objects is bad logic—that is, strictly speaking, not logic at all.

Thus, if the Sabellian really inferred that God cannot be One because He is Three, his inference was illogical (assuming that he was using the word One in the sense that the Catholic was using it), for Oneness, in the sense of harmonious unity, does not forbid internal distinctions. Bad logic, not good, was the cause of his heresy. The Catholic would retort, not by telling him to be illogical or to defy logic, but to substitute real logic for the absence of logic.

Again, Dr. Gore says: "You may press the claims of the individual or you may press the claims of authority to extremes. The former extreme we call individualism, the latter absolutism. Both are 'logical'; that is, both are logical applications of a true principle, but they are one-sided applications."

We reply that these extremes are not logical, but illogical, applications of true principles. It is bad logic —that is, not logic at all—to argue that because authority is good, therefore absolutism is better; or that because you believe in freedom, you must therefore believe in licence.

Objection

Reasoning may be invalid because it may be based on false or inadequate premisses.

Reply

This argument is irrelevant. It is a logical truism that right reasoning may lead to a wrong conclusion if it is based on wrong premisses. But in that case it is

the premisses that are to blame and not the reasoning. The moral is, not that we must hold reasoning in suspicion, but that we must hold our premisses in suspicion unless we have good grounds for thinking them correct.

To sum up: The objections we have considered seem obscure, incoherent, irrelevant, or positively fallacious. We should have been glad of a more scientific treatment of the case even at the risk of losing the gorgeous elaboration of Mozley's famous sentence.

5. REASONING IS UNIVERSALLY APPLICABLE: THERE IS NO SPHERE FROM WHICH REASONING IS EXCLUDED, NOT EVEN THE SPHERE OF DIRECT EXPERIENCE. IT IS NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR, NOR IS IT IDENTICAL WITH, BUT IT CAN AND MUST ACCOMPANY DIRECT EXPERIENCE

Objection

Granting, so it may be said, that reasoning is valid when it is to be had, yet there are spheres from which it is excluded—in which it has no applicability. It has no place in the sphere of *religion.*

Reply

Stated in this comprehensive form the objection is too paradoxical to be taken seriously. It makes waste paper, not only of all the theologies, but even of all the religious and homiletic works that have ever been published. Even homiletic works contain some amount of explicit, and much more of implied, reasoning.

Some of the ways in which reasoning enters the

sphere of religion are discussed in the following sections.

Objection

Reasoning has no place in the sphere of *direct experience.* There are truths which reasoning can neither prove nor disprove—and here reasoning has no applicability; it can only recognize its own limitations: "We are conscious of powers that are greater than intelligence"; "Intellect is not the sole touchstone of reality"; "The heart has reasons of which the mind knows nothing"; "Believing where we cannot prove" may be a duty, for "Nothing worthy of believing can be proved nor yet disproved."

If reasoning be not excluded from religion as a whole, it is excluded from those spheres of religion in which the feelings or intuition have control.

Reply

In the first place *we admit that there are truths known by direct experience which reasoning cannot prove.* A logician admits that he must begin by taking something for granted, otherwise he could never get a start. We should make no progress if we had to go back to a beginning which is infinitely far away.

What these truths are, and how many they are, in the sphere of religion is another matter. Dean Rashdall stoutly maintains (as we shall see later on) that as far as he is concerned there are none; even the existence of God is not known by direct experience; the funda-

mental truths of morality are alone known in this way. But with this point we are not at present concerned.

Granting that there are such truths, reasoning still comes in in two ways.

(*a*) *Reasoning may use the truths gained by direct experience as premisses to arrive at further truths.*

Thus we admit that reasoning pure and simple cannot give us knowledge of the value of love. We have here a judgment about the *value* of things, and in such judgments the feelings must play their part. Certainly if I had never felt love, I could not know what it is, nor could I know its value. We may allow, for the sake of the argument, that this is one of those truths that are known to us by direct experience.

But this does not prevent me from using such truths as these to serve as premisses in an argument; e.g. I may go on to say that because love is so valuable, therefore it has a place in the character of God from whom all good things come.

Browning does this over and over again; if God is only power and not love, then:

The loving worm within its clod
Is better than a loveless God:

but this, so he implied, is absurd, and therefore in God love has place.

A writer who is in thorough sympathy with mysticism puts this point clearly: the view which seems to him most satisfactory "maintains the unity of the human mind; it posits no yawning gulf between intellect and

intuition (which appears as a main defect or difficulty in Bergson's system), but regards the intellectual and the intuitional modes of apprehensions as complementary capacities of a single mind ; it supplies the intellect with the grist of spiritual experience to be ground into a rational creed . . . and enables us to differentiate between the value of the various expressions which (different religions) give respectively to their experiences of the infinite." *

(*b*) *Reasoning may* TEST *alleged direct experiences*, distinguishing the real from the fictitious.

It must be admitted that such testing is necessary. The heart may have its own reasons, but the heart is deceitful, and may mistake prejudices for intuitions. We may think our reasonings good when they are not, but so also may we be mistaken with regard to what we think are direct experiences ; we may confound them with prejudices due to our education. This is generally admitted.

If we refused to make this admission, we should find ourselves pledged to go much further than we are inclined. We should have to accept, for instance, the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, of which Bishop Dupanloup said, " If the Church has not yet made it a dogma of faith, our hearts have long since made it a dogma of love " (" words which," so a correspondent in the *Church Times* writes, " sum up the attitude of many of us "). We should have to accept all the tenets (many of them mutually contradictory) of all the religions and

* Chandler, " Cult of the Passing Moment," p. 48.

of all the sects, from those of the Buddhists and the Brahminists to those of the Seventh Day Adventists and the Plymouth Brethren. They have all made this appeal to direct experience. Mozley might have said of this direct experience what he did say of logic, and his case would have been more plausible. "Our hearts tell us this or that," say all the sects, "therefore put no trust in the heart. Trust reason."

(*c*) Again, *we need reasoning to distinguish between direct experiences* on the one hand, and on the other the *dogmas* in which they have been expressed or symbolized, and the arguments by which they have been supported. Many modern writers who are in sympathy with these direct mystical experiences have drawn attention to the need of this distinction. St. Paul, they tell us, had a real experience of his relationship to a living Christ; but it does not follow that all his theories as to Christ's Resurrection and the significance of His death are true and valid. On the contrary, his convictions on these subjects were largely due to his environment, e.g. to his Rabbinical education or to contact with the Greek mysteries.

(*d*) Once more: *reasoning may be used to* ENDORSE *direct experiences which are admittedly genuine.* This is admitted even by the writers who attach the greatest weight to such experiences. They do not hesitate to reason out the way in which a direct experience harmonizes with others, and with the rest of our knowledge; e.g. how our experience of the fact and the value of our relationship with Christ fits in with our conviction that

human personality is not complete in itself apart from its relationship to other personalities.

(*e*) The theory that reasoning can recognize its own exclusion from the sphere of direct experience is a philosophical heresy. As Idealists have often explained, to say that reasoning can tell me that *x* or *z* are unknowable is a self-inconsistency. I cannot know that *x* and *z* are unknowable unless I know something about them from which I can *infer* that they are unknowable; and if I do know something about them, they are not unknowable. This has been pointed out over and over again in the philosophies, in regard to Spencer's theory of an Unknowable Absolute. It has been said with truth that in the result Spencer attributes more characteristics to his Unknowable Absolute than the orthodox believer attributes to his personal Deity. In the same way, if reasoning recognizes that it can know nothing of what we are told by "direct experience"—"by powers greater than intellect"—this means that it has taken these experiences and their objects into its own sphere; it has (to use a philosophical commonplace) transcended its limitations in the very act of recognizing them.

(*f*) *What is thought to be a case of direct experience often turns out on examination to be the result of reasoning.* In many cases the process of reasoning may be so rapid and so habitual that we are not conscious of it *as* reasoning, but the reasoning is there none the less, though it is reasoning of a subconscious, rather than of a conscious, order.

(Professor Munsterberg, it is true, denied the possi-

bility of this " subconscious " reasoning. What we call by this name is, so he seems to think, a psychical or a psycho-physical, rather than an intellectual process. However this may be, our argument is not materially affected. On either view a *process* of some sort is present ; and when our knowledge is the result of a process it is not the result of direct experience, which is marked by a certain immediacy and is not a process at all. Furthermore, it is doubtful whether Professor Munsterberg's psychical processes could exist except in the mind of a being who was *capable* of reasoning, and if so, then these processes may be called processes of reasoning of an indirect kind. In this chapter we use the term reasoning to cover all these processes, whether they are processes of conscious or subconscious reasoning, or whether they are psychical only.)

Thus people commonly speak as though their sensations gave them a direct knowledge of the things which they see or hear. But this is not the case. Sensations are worked up by a process of reasoning into a completed act of knowledge. Perhaps the majority of modern philosophers would agree with this assertion.

So, again, with regard to our recognition of other people's existence. "Most persons would be surprised to hear that their knowledge of the existence of the friend with whose body they are in physical contact is after all only an inference. This is sometimes denied by philosophers, but I have never been able to understand on what grounds. If I know *a priori* the existence of other men, I ought to be able to say *a priori* how many

men there are and to say something about them. And this is more than any one claims." *

Reasoning, again, not intuition, according to many philosophers, lies at the root of our knowledge of the existence of God. "It is from the existence of my own self that I infer the existence of other selves, whom I observe to behave in a manner resembling my own behaviour. It is by an only slightly more difficult and complicated inference from my own consciousness that I rise to that conception of a universal Consciousness which supplies me with at once the simplest and the most natural explanation both of my own existence and of the existence of the Nature which I see around me." †

(*g*) *The results of reasoning are not to be disparaged in contrast with the results of direct experience.*

Those who lay stress on direct experience often seem to think that knowledge gained by reasoning, conscious or otherwise, must necessarily lack warmth and enthusiasm, that it cannot make any appeal to the heart and the conscience. It is difficult to see why this should be the case; the burden of proof rests with the objector. It will be enough in this connexion to quote another passage from Dean Rashdall: "It is a mere prejudice to suppose that mediate knowledge is in any way less certain, less intimate, less trustworthy, less satisfying than immediate knowledge. Surely in the man who has discovered that (the knowledge of his friend is the result of an inference), the warmth of friendship was never dimmed by the reflection that his

* Rashdall, "Philosophy and Religion," p. 110. † *Ibid.*, p. 111.

knowledge is not immediate, but mediate." And again, "If we claim for man the possibility of just such a knowledge of God as a man may possess of his brother man, that is all that is wanted for the closest religious communion." *

6. REASON, THOUGH NOT REASONING, IS A NECESSARY ELEMENT IN ALL MEANS BY WHICH KNOWLEDGE IS GAINED. DIRECT EXPERIENCE IS UNABLE, NOT ONLY TO CONTRADICT, BUT TO GO BEYOND REASON. DIRECT EXPERIENCE IS IN FACT AN EXERCISE OR FUNCTION OF REASON

OBJECTION

Reason, in the sphere of spiritual truths, is superseded by higher faculties—by intuition or direct perception.

REPLY

(*a*) The objection may rest on a confusion betwen reasoning and reason. We do not claim, as objectors sometimes think, that nothing should be believed unless it has been proved by reasoning. We have denied that this is the case. Very few theologians would take the view, held by Professor McTaggart, that no one has a right to believe in God unless he is a metaphysician —that is, on the grounds of explicit metaphysical reasoning.

(*b*) Direct perception is a function or exercise of the reason. There is no need to make direct experience a

* Rashdall, "Philosophy and Religion," p. 111.

separate faculty. We do not have different eyes to see the stars in the sky and the stones at our feet. It is "my reason," we say, that recognizes the axioms of Euclid and the fact of duty. Why is my reason excluded from recognizing the love of my friends or the existence of God? My direct perception is an exercise of my reason, my feelings, and my will, of three faculties which work together inseparably in all means by which knowledge is gained.

We have a useful quotation to this effect from Moberly's "Atonement and Personality" (and no one would accuse Moberly of being an "intellectualist"): "It is a familiar fallacy of human language, that just when man's power of rational intelligence is reaching its own highest forms and highest powers, to deal with its own highest subject-matter, the terms intelligent and rational are too often withdrawn as though they belonged, by a sort of exclusive right, to those lower regions of experience, of which they were first used, and in which they are most widely familiar."

It is true that the sentence in Moberly which immediately precedes the one we have quoted runs as follows: "You cannot apprehend spiritual truths by precisely and solely the same faculties with which you apprehend scientific facts. The apprehending mind must itself be moral and spiritual if it is to have intelligence in the region of moral and spiritual things." Moberly here implies that spiritual truths are not apprehended by the reason alone. The feelings and the will must have their part. But modern philosophers would claim that even

in the sphere of scientific truths the feelings and the will must co-operate with the reason. We must have interest and attention to make knowledge possible, and these are aspects respectively of the feelings and the will.

CHAPTER XLVII

"TINTERN ABBEY REVISITED"

A corrupt following of Wordsworth. Dangers of a non-Christian mysticism.

WORDSWORTH'S poetry, rightly or wrongly, has been impressed into the service of those who cultivate that "grand theism which spurns the limitations" of creeds and sacraments. Men who take this attitude often show a certain amount of self-conscious superiority to the traditional religion.

The following verses may express this attitude more forcibly than prose, and the way in which it would be met by Christian experience. They may be taken as addressed to those who say they are followers of Wordsworth and are not.

LINES WRITTEN ABOUT SIX THOUSAND MILES FROM TINTERN ABBEY

I shall revisit Tintern. I shall feel
Once more the joy of elevating thoughts—
Those thoughts of which, as every student knows,
My verses are the classical account—
That sense sublime of something interfused
Throughout all thinking beings, all things thought,
Sea, earth, and sky, a Presence Immanent.

Meanwhile I think of those strange granite rocks
In far Rhodesia, where the giant sleeps
The sleep eternal in the sepulchre
Which God made to his measure. He, though dead,
Still speaks to us who listen, and like him
I find my Temple on the Mountain slopes,
Between the grey cliffs and the sounding sea.
I seek no better place to dream my dreams
And cultivate my higher faculties
In mystic sweet communion with myself. . . .

But some one interrupts my ecstasy :—

" You know that close by in the village Church
There is an Altar. You should worship there,
With ploughboys, farmers, common labourers,
Where God draws nearest man and man to God.

" You, wrapped in solitary dreams, exist
In a false independence, just as did
The Stoics, your precursors. You repeat
Their pride, their dignity, their weariness,
Their sad external care for other men,
And their incurable internal care
About themselves—unamiable traits
Derived from what they call the Inner Light,
Dismal Illumination. (These last lines,
As you might gather from their style alone,
Come almost word for word from Chesterton.)

True, well-known authors, willing to appear
Broad-minded—in the vulgar sense—have call'd
Them 'Seekers after God.' But how could men
Who made their watchword 'Self-Sufficiency'
Be seeking anything except themselves?

"You were not made to find God by yourself,
In splendid isolation, satisfied
With meadows, mountains, rivers, and the stars.
I say it is the Altar and the Church
Which form the meeting-place of God and man.

"From what you hear and read you get to know
Much that is true about your country's king—
About his history and his character;
And yet you cannot say, 'I know the king.'
But there's a difference if he condescends
To break through his official fixed routine
And meet his subjects in the market-place
In personal familiar intercourse.
Then you can say, 'I know the king himself.'
On such occasions you are nearer him
Than when, in contemplative solitude,
You dwell within the circle of yourself,
Thinking high thoughts of royal influence,
Kingship in general, diffused throughout
The order and the progress of the State;
For, lost in admiration of the depth
Of your deep thoughts, you tend to substitute
Self-worship for the worship of the king.

" If man is meant, as he is meant, not just
To know about God, but to know God's Self,
Then God must manifest Himself to man.
He must transcend the order of the world—
Which gives us truths about Him, not Himself—
By outward acts and deeds in space and time.
So at the Altar in the Eucharist
Time and Eternity are reconciled ;
This is the Deed by which God gives Himself
That we may know Him and be joined to Him.
And all that see it say, ' This hath God done ;
It is His work. Lo, God Himself is here.
This is none other than the House of God.'

" That sense sublime in which you take a pride
Does not reveal to you God's very Self,
But, at the best, some vague impersonal force.
You show that clearly when you talk of Him
As Motion, Spirit, Presence,—anything
Rather than God outright, the Living God.
And so we find you led unwittingly
To put your feelings in the place of God ;
For it is in your human deeds and words
That this vague Presence must express itself,
Which makes that presence less a God than you,
Without whom it remains impersonal."

I did not listen to a word he said.
It may be true, but I don't hold with it.

It may be good philosophy, but, oh,
The difference to me is—none at all.

What need have such as I of Church or Priest,
Of Altars, Ceremonies, Sacraments?
My own thoughts are my Altar. He who thinks
Such edifying thoughts, without the use
Of sacerdotal intermediaries,
Identifies himself with Deity.

The Church bells ring. Am I to leave the stars
To go to Church? Will you put out my eyes?
Let the bell call me. I will not come down.

We poets are the prophets of our age:
The theologians all agree on this:—
What wonder if we take them at their word?

I am the most self-conscious soul alive,
And face my solemn task most seriously;
Others are poets; I am poetry.

And so, well satisfied with self and God,
I firmly purpose to immortalize—
As I have done before—in noble words
My noble sentiments, and thus provide
Endless quotations for posterity.

Mysticism goes beyond its province when it tells us that it is needless to worship God in human temples

when we can worship Him so well in His own natural temples on the mountains or in the forest. God is immanent in Nature, no doubt, but He comes closest to us in His own appointed ways, and we suffer if we do not conform ourselves to His methods. Our self-will brings about its own revenge. The non-Catholic mystic tends to become pantheistic, to lose his sense of God's personality, to lose the sense of the Divine Fatherhood in a sort of vague cosmic emotion. God becomes a mere "power not ourselves that works for righteousness," not a personal being with Whom we can enter into personal relationship.

The revelation of God in Christ is a means by which we avoid substituting this vague mystical feeling for faith in God as a Father, and the worship of the Eucharist is a means by which we come to the Father through the Son.

CHAPTER XLVIII

"THE PRESENT REFLECTIONS OF OMAR KHAYYÁM"

The cult of a refined sensuality was common in the old world—the world before the war. Fitzgerald's "Omar," rightly or wrongly, has been interpreted as an expression of its ideal—the ideal of "the eternal prodigal among the eternal swine." Events have driven it underground, but human nature has not changed, and we have no guarantee that the same tendencies do not still exist. Sensuality and selfishness in its more strenuous forms are often found alternating with each other in the same persons.

The ideal hides its naked deformity under a cloak of æstheticism, stifling the voice of duty by the cry of art for art's sake, and making a seductive melancholy that is sensitive to the badness of things a substitute for any effort to make them better. It supports itself by a shallow philosophy that palms off on the Universe the blame of human weakness; prides itself on raising us to a sphere "above good and evil"; and restates in luscious language hoary objections to the obsolete principles of religion.

It is an ideal that issues ultimately in an inevitable disillusionment, and the ghost of that disillusionment haunts some of its adherents even from the first. They become "heavy and depressed, like sodden woods that drop their dead leaves slowly, one by one, through the

thick darkness of the autumn evenings, until all the air is gross with the odours of decay."

The following verses are an attempt to sum up some of the points to which we have referred :

Tried, judged, condemned, in his own Place in Hell,
Omar remembers how the Tavern-Bell
Welcomed its little Children to the Cup—
" Drink, Souls ; dear Souls, be merry ; all is well."

And how at Cock-crow while he stood before
The Tavern shouting " Open then the Door "—
" Thou Fool," said One, " this Day thy Soul departs
To its long Home. Thou shalt return no more."

" Now each new Day," he thinks, " the old Desire
Makes my dead Soul for its dead Joys aspire ;
But no bright Angel-shape steals through the Gloom
To cool the Tongue with unslaked Thirst afire.

" And I have many Brethren left behind
Who take me for their God. Well, they will find
Unwarned by me the inevitable Ditch ;
Let them alone, blind Pupils of the Blind.

" Poor Summer-flies caught by the Melody
Of my sweet Verse and subtle Sophistry.
One Blast of Truth sweeps through the Fabric fair,
And Web, Flies, Spider perish wretchedly.

" I reasoned much about the False and True ;
But what Truth really is I never knew ;
Nor did I want to know lest Truth should prove
An Obstacle to what I meant to do.

" Sage, Prophet, Poet, Doctor, and Divine
Revolve deep Thoughts, and argue, and define ;
Deep calls to Deep, but called in vain to one
Who never had been deep in aught but Wine.

" The Grape for me, for them the high Debate :
And yet on Providence, Foreknowledge, Fate,
On Man, Free-will, on God, on Everything,
To dogmatize I did not hesitate.

" I chattered of the Potter and the Pot ;
Denied Man Right or Power to choose his Lot ;
And yet I never ceased to whisper—" Choose !
Choose Wine, my Friend, but Virtue, choose it not."

" Our thick words bubble upwards where we lie ;
Wine, Wine was all we thought of 'neath the Sky ;
Wine now we long for choking in the Slime,
Wine, only Wine, as the long Years go by.

" Who said ' Repent ' ? Could I with Fate conspire
To live my Life again on Earth entire,
I could not, would not change it. What have I
To do with God ? Wine is my heart's Desire.

" ' The Good once seen, we needs must love the Good '—
But I refused to love it when I could.
Wine was my Good. No higher Good I sought ;
So now I could not love it if I would."

. . . . .

The Preacher, too, said " All is vanity,"
But did not say that living filthily
With Epicurus in a gilded Sty
Was a fit way to cure his Misery.

The World was bad no doubt, and that was sad ;
All the more reason he should not be bad.
Two Bads were worse than one. He'd play Man's Part ;
If this was Madness, well, he would be mad.

At any rate he wished the Wrong made Right ;
Put that to his Account. Then when the Night
Passed from his Soul—as pass it did, we trust—
Dazzled, but glad, he rose to greet the Light.

. . . . .

" Naked and not ashamed "—that was sublime.
To be ashamed and naked marks a Crime ;
To vaunt the Nakedness and hide the Shame
Is Shame most shameful to the end of Time.

So from the Streams and Woods and pleasant Grass,
To their Reward the friends of Omar pass,
Sans Song, sans Wine, sans End, sans Everything ;
Naught left except—an empty, upturned Glass.

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